United Nations E/CN.6/2011/4

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 November 2010

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February-4 March 2011
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

# Discussion guide for the high-level round table on access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work

**Note by the Bureau of the Commission on the Status of Women**

## I. Background

1. At its fiftieth session, held in 2006, the Commission decided that the annual interactive high-level round table would focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme.[1]

## II. Organizational matters

### Theme

2. The high-level round table will focus on the priority theme of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, "Access and participation of

* E/CN.6/2011/1

[1] Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9, para. 3.

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women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work".[2]

## Participants

3. The high-level round table provides an opportunity for high-level representatives of Member States attending the fifty-fifth session of the Commission to engage in dialogue and share experiences and lessons learned. The high-level representatives may include: ministers of women's affairs; heads of national mechanisms for gender equality; and senior officials from other relevant ministries, such as those of education, labour, trade, industry, science and technology, development, foreign affairs, finance, health, agriculture, energy and the environment, as well as national statistical offices. The high-level round table will be open to other members of the Commission and observers.

## Timing

4. The high-level round table will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 22 February 2011, from 3 to 6 p.m.

## Format

5. To allow for interactions among as many participants as possible, the round table will be conducted simultaneously in two parallel meetings on the same theme.

6. The chairs of the two parallel meetings will guide the discussions with a view to promoting the interactive nature of the round table. Interventions shall not exceed three minutes. Speakers will be encouraged to ask questions and offer comments on interventions made during the dialogue. Written statements are strongly discouraged.

7. Each meeting of the round table will be introduced by a keynote speaker. A senior official from an entity of the United Nations system and a representative of a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council will provide comments at the end of the dialogue and respond to the discussion.

## Outcome

8. The outcome of the high-level round table will be a summary by the Chair.

[2] Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, para. 2 (b).

# III. Elements for discussion in the high-level round table

## A. Background

9. The issues covered in the Commission's priority theme of 2011 have, to different degrees and from particular perspectives and approaches, been part of past intergovernmental discussions and outcomes. The main policy instruments and guidance are summarized below.

10. The Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), highlighted the equal access of women and girls to education and employment as part of the global policy framework for women's human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Platform confirmed education as a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Governments were urged to eliminate disparities between women and men in access to education and educational outcomes at all levels and in all forms of education, including primary, secondary and tertiary education, vocational training, adult literacy and lifelong learning, in line with the outcome of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All.

11. The Platform recognized the importance of women's access to full employment and decent work in addressing the economic potential and independence of women. Governments and all stakeholders were called upon to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination in the labour market, including discriminatory hiring and promotion practices and occupational segregation, to promote women's equal rights to resources, employment, markets and trades, and to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making (paras. 165, 166, 178 and 190).

12. The Platform called on Governments and all stakeholders to increase women's access to and retention in science and technology, including by adapting curricula and teaching materials and by increasing the share of women teachers in scientific and technological disciplines at all levels of education (paras. 82 (g) and 83 (f)), and to help advance opportunities for women in science and technology (paras. 82 (c) and (e) and 85 (b)). Emphasis was placed on the need to promote gender-sensitive and women-centred health research, treatment and technology, to link traditional and indigenous knowledge with modern medicine (para. 109 (b)), as well as to create training, research and resource centres that disseminate environmentally sound technologies to women (para. 258 (b) (v)). The need for legislative and administrative reforms to give women equal rights with men to economic resources such as access to appropriate new technology (para. 165 (e)) was also mentioned. The need for outreach programmes to inform low-income and poor women, particularly in rural and remote areas, of opportunities for market and technology access, and assistance in taking advantage of such opportunities (para. 173 (c)) was highlighted.

13. At the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in June 2000, Governments called for equal access to education and elimination of gender disparities in education, including vocational training, and science and technology (para. 67 (a)). They highlighted the need to develop policies and programmes to enhance the employability of women and their access to quality jobs, through improving access to formal, non-formal and vocational training, lifelong learning

and retraining, and long-distance education (para. 82 (e)). The importance of addressing gender stereotyping as one of the root causes of occupational segregation was emphasized (para. 82 (j)), as were the need to encourage and support the education of girls in science, mathematics, new technologies, including information technologies, and technical subjects, and the need to encourage women, including through career counselling, to seek employment in high-growth and high-wage sectors and jobs (para. 82 (i)). The importance of providing access to and control over technology, particularly for women living in poverty and for women entrepreneurs, was emphasized (paras. 74 (a) and 82 (g)) (see A/S-23/13).

14. The Commission on the Status of Women last considered education and training as a priority theme in 1997. Since then, it has included critical aspects of women's and girls' access to and participation in education, training, science and technology, as well as access to decent work in its deliberations and outcomes, most recently in its agreed conclusions of 2007 on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child (see E/2007/27).

15. In its agreed conclusions on women and the environment (1997), the Commission urged stakeholders to support the role of women in developing environmentally sound technologies and in influencing the development of new and appropriate technologies (see E/1997/27). In its agreed conclusions on education and training of women (1997), the Commission called on stakeholders to give renewed importance to education in mathematics, science and technology for girls and women, including the use of information technology. The Commission also encouraged women's participation in development of new technologies, from design to application, monitoring and evaluation (ibid.).

16. In its agreed conclusions on participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women (2003), the Commission noted the potential of using technologies to advance women's employment opportunities through equal access for women to economic activities based on information and communication technologies (ICT), to information systems and improved technologies, and to new employment opportunities in this area (see E/2003/27). In the agreed conclusions on enhanced participation of women in development (2006) the Commission highlighted the need to increase women's and girls' equal and effective access to and use of information and communication technologies, as well as applied technology (see E/2006/27). In the agreed conclusions on financing gender equality and the empowerment of women (2008) the Commission recognized the importance of assisting women-owned businesses in participating in and benefiting from technological innovation and transfer (see E/2008/27).

17. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development has given visibility to gender equality considerations in its annual resolutions on science and technology for development. It is also the only functional commission that has established a Gender Advisory Board, which provides advice on the gender perspectives of the Commission's work. At its eighth session (2005), the Commission called on Governments to strengthen science and technology educational systems through strong gender policies that ensure equal access to technological and scientific studies for both women and men (see E/2005/31). At its twelfth session (2009), the Commission called on Governments to expand

opportunities for science, technology and engineering education and research, and to provide broadband connectivity, especially for women (see E/2009/31). During a panel discussion on the theme "Gender and science and technology" at the Commission's thirteenth session (2010), Governments and the international community were called upon to work towards a greater role for women in science and technology as well as greater use of science and technology to address women's needs (see E/2010/92).

18. The World Summit on the Information Society, in the Geneva Plan of Action (2003) (see A/C.2/59/3) and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society (2005) (see A/60/687), recognized the importance of promoting women's participation in ICT, including at decision-making levels. It called for equal training opportunities in ICT-related fields for women and early intervention programmes in science and technology, targeted at young girls, in order to increase the number of women in ICT careers. It also highlighted the need for gender-responsive ICT policies. At the 2005 World Summit, Governments committed to ensuring women's equal access to productive assets and resources, including technology.[3]

19. Concrete goals have been set at global level for women's and girls' access to and participation in education and full employment, to be reached by 2015. The World Education Forum in the Dakar Framework for Action[4] (2000) set the six Education for All (EFA) goals, two of which specifically aim at achieving gender equality in education. Two of the eight Millennium Development Goals aim at gender equality and education. Goal 2 aims at universal primary education, while one of the targets under Goal 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment is to eliminate gender disparity in all levels of education no later than 2015.

## B. Discussion guide

20. During the round table, high-level representatives from Member States are expected to focus on lessons learned, achievements and good practices, as well as gaps and challenges, with supporting data where available, with respect to implementation at the national level of commitments on the priority theme.

21. At the national level, different stakeholders contribute to realizing girls' and women's access to and participation in the areas identified in the theme, and to implementing previous commitments and actions. Participants may wish to provide information, based on their national experiences, actions taken, lessons learned and good or promising practices in relation to the following issues:

(a) Actions taken and results achieved for women and girls in high-quality formal and non-formal education at all levels. This could include: successful policies and programmes that have resulted in marked increases in women's and girls' access to and participation in formal as well as non-formal education; effective teacher qualification processes, teacher training in gender-sensitive teaching methods and development of gender-sensitive curricula and materials; successful literacy and job training programmes; educational initiatives that have resulted in measurable reductions in gender stereotypes; and measures that have encouraged

[3] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[4] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum* (Paris, 2000).

girls and women, as well as boys and men, to participate in non-traditional fields of study;

(b) Actions taken and results achieved for women and girls in science and technology. This could include: interventions to increase the number of women and girls in science and technology education and employment; steps taken and results achieved to overcome gender stereotypes and gender bias in science and technology;

(c) Linking women's and girls' educational achievements in all fields, especially in science and technology, with commensurate opportunities in the labour market. This could include examples of policies and strategies that have resulted in: improved transitioning of women from school/training to work; removal of barriers women face in labour force participation; improved retention and career development of women; reduced occupational segregation as well as vertical segregation; and support for women entrepreneurs;

(d) Policies and measures that have resulted in the elimination of gender bias in scientific research and technology development. This could include: changing research priorities and goals to take into account the needs of women and girls, men and boys; providing funds to mainstream gender analysis methodologies in scientific research; and building capacity on gender issues in research, development and innovation; and

(e) Actions taken to advance towards the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, through women's access to and use of technology. This could include: strengthening research capacities; improving the process of development, production and distribution of technologies; and strengthening technological collaborations and partnerships.

United Nations E/CN.6/2011/5

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 December 2010

Original: English

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**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February–4 March 2011
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

# Progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work

**Report of the Secretary-General**

*Summary*

The present report examines the extent to which women's and girls' access to and participation in formal and non-formal education and training translate into full employment and decent work. It provides recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women.

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# I. Introduction

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, the Commission on the Status of Women will consider at its fifty-fifth session as its priority theme "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work". In order to allow for an in-depth analysis of the theme, the present report examines the extent to which women's and girls' access to and participation in formal and non-formal education and training translate into full employment and decent work. Gender equality issues in science and technology, including science and technology education and employment, are addressed in a separate report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme (E/CN.6/2011/3). Both reports serve as inputs for the Commission's consideration of the priority theme.

2. The present report incorporates an analysis of contributions by Member States[1] on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in national policies and programmes, and thus responds to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9. It also draws on information and data from publications by United Nations entities, an online discussion[2] and other sources as indicated, and concludes with recommendations for future action for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women.

# II. Background

3. The Beijing Platform for Action[3] highlighted education as a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace, and urged Governments to eliminate disparities between women and men in access to education and educational outcomes at all levels and in all forms of education, including primary, secondary and tertiary education, vocational training, adult literacy and lifelong learning, in line with the outcome of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All. At the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in 2000, Governments called for equal access to education and the elimination of gender disparities in education, including vocational training, and science and technology. They highlighted the need to develop policies and programmes to enhance the employability of women and their access to quality jobs, through improving access to formal, non-formal and vocational training, lifelong learning and retraining and long-distance education. The importance of addressing gender stereotyping as one of the root causes of occupational segregation was also emphasized.

[1] Contributions were received from the Governments of Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Belarus, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Zambia.

[2] See www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw55/onlinediscussion.html.

[3] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

4. In the Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2), world leaders committed themselves to achieving gender equality in education by 2015. In 2000, the World Education Forum in Dakar set the six Education for All goals, two of which focus specifically on achieving gender equality in education. The Millennium Development Goals address gender equality and education in two of the eight goals. Goal 2 focuses on universal primary education, while one of the targets of Goal 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment is the elimination of gender disparity in all levels of education.

5. The Commission on the Status of Women last considered education and training as a priority theme in 1997, and has repeatedly addressed critical aspects of women's and girls' access to and participation in education, training, science and technology, as well as access to decent work, in its deliberations and outcomes, including in its agreed conclusions of 2007 on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child (see E/2007/27/E/CN.6/2007/9, chap. I.A).

6. In December 2009, States members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization adopted the Belém Framework for Action at the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education, in which they committed themselves to prioritizing investment for women in lifelong learning and improving their access to and participation in adult learning and education programmes.

7. Women's and girls' access to and participation in education, training, science and technology and their access to full employment and decent work are also addressed in human rights instruments and their monitoring mechanisms. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women requires States parties to eliminate discrimination against women in education and employment. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights contains a specific provision on fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value for women. International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions of particular relevance to gender equality include the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156).

8. In its concluding observations, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women regularly expresses concern about girls' high drop-out rates from school, especially at the secondary level, owing to early marriages, traditional sex role stereotypes, lack of means of transportation, indirect costs of education and involvement in economic activities, in particular among girls living in rural or remote areas and girls belonging to linguistic or ethnic minorities.

9. In June 2009, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution entitled "Recovering from the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact" to address the social and employment impact of the international financial and economic crisis.[4] Noting that the crisis should be viewed as an opportunity to shape new gender equality policy responses, the Conference also adopted comprehensive recommendations on gender equality in the world of work, including sections on employment, social protection,

[4] ILO, *Recovering from the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2009).

fundamental principles and rights at work, social dialogue and tripartism and the roles of Governments, employers' organizations, workers' organizations and ILO.[8]

## III. Women's access to and participation in education and training[9]

### Overview

10. Education is a key driver of economic growth and social change, and its importance for achieving gender equality is well recognized. Evidence from 24 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, reveals that the birth rate among girls with no education is over four times higher than that among girls with secondary education or higher.[7] Educational opportunities have expanded over the last decades, enabling a larger share of the world population to access formal education. The ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment has steadily improved, reaching 97 girls per 100 boys at primary level, 96 girls per 100 boys at secondary level and 108 women per 100 men at tertiary level in 2008.[8]

11. While substantial progress has been achieved, gaps remain in women's and girls' access to education. In 2007, 72 million children of primary-school age were out of school, 54 per cent of whom were girls.[9] Similarly, 54 per cent of the 71 million adolescents who were out of school in 2007 were girls.[10] In addition, out-of-school girls are less likely to ever go to school than boys. Women's and girls' access to post-primary education remains restricted in many parts of the world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia and Southern Asia.[11] In addition, gender disparities in terms of access and occupational segregation are often more pronounced in technical and vocational education than in general education.[7]

12. Global averages further mask the wide variations in participation rates in education both between and within countries. For example, more girls than boys are enrolled in higher education in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Africa and South-East Asia, while girls' enrolment is much lower than boys' in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia.[11] In addition, there are disparities with regard to fields of study, as women and girls remain overrepresented in the humanities and social sciences and underrepresented in science and engineering.

[8] See ILO, Report of the Committee on Gender Equality, Provisional Record No. 13, International Labour Conference, 98th session, Geneva, 2009 (ILO document ILC98-PR13-2009-06-0323-1-En.doc), resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work.

[9] Unless otherwise indicated, the information in sections III and IV of the report is derived from Member States' inputs (see note 1 above).

[7] World Bank, "Ready for work: increasing economic opportunity for adolescent girls and young women" (Washington, D.C., 2008).

[8] UNESCO, *Global Education Digest 2010*, available from www.uis.unesco.org, Publications.

[9] UNESCO, *Reaching the Marginalized*, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010, available from www.uis.unesco.org, Publications.

[10] M. Bruneforth and P. Wallet, "Developing indicators to monitor out-of-school adolescents", background paper cited in *Reaching the Marginalized*, note 9 above.

[11] United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2010* (New York, 2010).

13. Women comprise nearly two thirds of the world's 759 million illiterate adults.[12] Despite progress in female literacy rates in many regions, gender disparities persist in some regions, including the Arab States, South and West Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, where female literacy rates are below 62 per cent.

14. While these statistics are useful in signalling changes over time, cross-national comparable sex-disaggregated data are needed to explore the underlying causes of inequalities, such as differences in dropout and completion rates, low school attendance and low participation by sex in certain subjects or fields of study, in order to formulate appropriate policy responses to address such inequalities.[5] The establishment of gender observatories, for example in Burkina Faso, can facilitate the collection of sex-disaggregated data to monitor and evaluate progress in this area.

15. While it is not yet clear what impact the financial and economic crisis will have on girls' education, the crisis has jeopardized social services in many countries, including the provision of education. For instance, the resources available for education in sub-Saharan Africa were estimated to decline by $4.6 billion a year on average in 2009 and 2010.[13] Experience from past crises suggests that the tendency to cut back public expenditures during times of financial and economic crisis and decreases in household incomes lead to withdrawal of girls from school (E/2010/4-E/CN.6/2010/2, para. 72).

**Increasing access to education**

16. The 15-year review of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[14] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly[15] showed that States have undertaken a wide range of actions to implement the strategic objectives for education and training at the national level, with substantial gains for women and girls particularly in relation to access (E/2010/4-E/CN.6/2010/2, para. 49).

17. Progress in narrowing gender gaps is particularly visible in countries that have undertaken reforms to address multiple forms of disadvantages girls face, including financial and cultural barriers.[12] Initiatives include recruiting female teachers, providing incentives for their deployment to rural areas, giving teachers gender-sensitization training and building satellite schools. A number of countries, including Cambodia, Canada, El Salvador and Germany have taken measures to mainstream gender perspectives in the education sector. The National Vocational and Technical Education Commission in Pakistan has developed a national skills strategy which mainstreams gender into technical education to improve access, equity and employability of women through skill development. States have been active in addressing girls' access to education in the framework of development cooperation. For instance, Belgium's and Japan's development assistance includes a

[12] *Reaching the Marginalized*, note 9 above, "Gender overview", paper prepared for Beijing + 15 consultation.

[13] UNESCO, *Overcoming Inequality: Why Governance Matters*, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009, available from www.uis.unesco.org, Publications.

[14] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No.E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[15] Resolution S-23/2, annex and resolution S-23/3, annex.

focus on building schools, training teachers and assisting in curriculum development.

18. Poverty remains a key obstacle to girls' access to education. Girls' access to education can be particularly limited if they live in poverty, in rural areas or in urban slums, belong to a minority group, are affected by armed conflict or live with disabilities. In Yemen, girls' primary school enrolment was found to be lowest in the poorest and rural areas, where 70 per cent of out-of-school children were girls and 88 per cent lived in rural areas in 2005.[16] Data from 42 countries show that secondary-school-age girls from the poorest households are half as likely to go to school as girls from the wealthiest households.[17]

19. In the context of limited family resources, parents may favour educating boys over girls, as they may consider that any economic benefits of girls' education would be reaped by future in-laws or because they may be concerned that girls would not be able to find job opportunities after school.[18] Girls may also be needed at home to engage in domestic chores and sibling care. Another factor underlying some girls' exclusion from education is child labour. According to a study of 16 household-based national child labour surveys, 21.2 per cent of boys and 15 per cent of girls aged 5 to 14, and 45.5 per cent of boys and 30.4 per cent of girls aged 15 to 17, participate in the labour market. If the definition of work is taken to include non-economic activities, girls have higher working rates than boys. Among children aged 5 to 14 years, who perform household chores for 28 hours per week or more, the hourly school attendance rate decreases at a faster pace for girls than boys.[19]

20. Financial incentives targeted at families have been of particular importance in increasing girls' enrolment in schools. Some interventions targeted at both girls and boys to make education more affordable for the poorest, such as the elimination of school fees, school feeding programmes and the distribution of free school uniforms, have increased demand for primary schooling and proved particularly beneficial to girls in lower secondary school.[18] The elimination of school fees, however, can force schools faced with loss of revenue to introduce informal fees by charging parents for textbooks and other teaching and learning supplies.[12]

21. A number of countries in Latin America, the Middle East and Africa have implemented conditional cash transfer programmes which provide cash assistance to mothers or families to ensure the enrolment and retention of girls.[19] The results are, however, mixed in terms of closing the gender gap. An evaluation of the Nicaraguan social safety net programme has found little difference in the impact on enrolment rates for girls and for boys.[20] The Oportunidades programme, formerly known as

[16] Plan International, "Behind the screen: an inside look at gender inequality in Asia", revised edition, 2008, available at http://plan-international.org/files/Asia/publications/behindthescreen.pdf.

[17] Federico Blanco Allais, "Assessing the gender gap: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys" (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

[18] International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, *Enduring Questions Brief*, No. 8, May 2009.

[19] E. Unterhalter et. al., "Gender equality and women and girls' education, 1995-2010: How much is there a space for hope?", paper for UNESCO 15-year review of the Beijing Platform of Action, 2010.

[20] J. A. Maluccio and R. Flores "Impact evaluation of a conditional cash transfer program: the Nicaraguan Red de Proteccion Social", Discussion Paper No. 184 (Washington, D.C., International Food Policy Research Institute, 2004).

Progresa, in Mexico increased the secondary school enrolment rate by 9.2 percentage points for girls and 6.2 percentage points for boys, with little impact on primary school enrolment.[21] A conditional cash transfer programme targeted at female students in the Punjab province of Pakistan was successful in increasing girls' enrolment in grades 6 to 8 with positive spillover effects on boys' enrolment.[22] There is, however, concern that such programmes can reinforce gender divisions of labour and perpetuate gender stereotypes if mothers are expected to take the full responsibility for complying with all the conditions attached to participation in the programmes.[23]

22. Governments have carried out awareness-raising campaigns to convince parents of the importance of girls' education. A number of Governments in West Africa worked with village heads and religious leaders to launch campaigns targeted at parents to communicate the importance of educating daughters.[24] Zambia sensitized communities on the importance of girls' education and provided bursaries to girls. Turkey's "Snowdrops" and "Father, send me to school" campaigns had a significant impact on girls' schooling.

23. Early marriage or early pregnancy can force some girls to drop out of school. Data from demographic and health surveys in 60 countries suggest that 50 per cent of women aged 20-24 are married before the age of 18 in South Asia, 41 per cent in Africa and 25 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean.[25]

24. Measures taken by Governments to reduce dropouts linked to early pregnancy included revision of education codes to allow teenage mothers to return to school.[26] In the United Republic of Tanzania, legal change is taking place, with Sweden's assistance, to allow girls and young women to return to school after childbirth. The Danish University and Property Agency, under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, gives bonuses to universities when students complete their studies within the official duration of the programme, while taking into account childbearing time for female students.

25. Concerns about girls' safety at school, in particular their vulnerability to sexual violence on the way to or within school, can also force parents to withdraw girls from school.[26] Parents of girls in remote rural areas are particularly concerned about their daughters' safety because of the distance to school.[27] Turkey has established boarding schools in villages and small settlements, in particular where girls drop out. In addition, investments in infrastructure such as water, transportation and energy can improve the safety of girls at and on the way to

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[21] T. P. Schultz, "School subsidies for the poor: evaluating the Mexican Progresa poverty program", *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 74, No. 1 (2004), pp. 199-250. Available at http://ideas.repec.org/ege/wpaper/834.html.

[22] A. Hasan, "Gender-targeted conditional cash transfers: enrollment, spillover effects and instructional quality", Policy Research Working Paper, No. 5257, (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2010).

[23] M. Molyneux, "Change and continuity in social protection in Latin America: mothers at the service of the state" (Geneva, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2007).

[24] M. Buvinic et. al., "Gender shapes adolescence", *Development Outreach*, vol. 9, No. 2 (2007), pp. 12-15.

[25] UNDP, "What will it take to achieve the Millennium Development Goals?: an international assessment" (New York, June 2010).

[26] Plan International, *Because I am a Girl: The State of the World's Girls 2009*, available from http://plan-international.org.

school, as well as significantly reduce girls' burden of unpaid work, such as collection of water and fuel. Belgium has funded several projects, mainly in Morocco and Senegal, to increase access to water and sanitation in rural areas in view of the fact that girls bear the main responsibility for collecting water and may not be sent to school in the absence of sanitary latrines. Djibouti has improved the primary schools by equipping them with water, electricity, latrines, playgrounds and safe spaces.

26. Quotas have also been used to ensure that girls and boys, women and men have equal access to learning opportunities and that resources are distributed in such a way as to narrow the gender gap.[27] For instance, in Zambia, 30 per cent of university admissions slots have been reserved for girls, while both female and male applicants compete for the remaining 70 per cent.

27. Member States promoted girls' access to education through support to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative and civil society organizations such as the Forum for African Women Educationalists. Norway contributed to work of the United Nations Children's Fund to strengthen primary education, girls' rights and gender equality. Denmark provided DKK 135 million to the Education for All Fast Track Initiative, with a focus on strengthening girls' access to education.

**Enhancing quality of education and eliminating gender stereotypes**

28. Achieving education for all depends not only on increased access, but also on what girls and boys learn at school. Poor quality of education has emerged as a major concern, particularly in the developing world, as many children leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, girls and women need more than reading, writing and mathematics. They must also develop skills relevant for today's job market, such as critical thinking, teamwork, planning and organizing, communication and leadership.

29. Quality education depends on a number of factors, including school infrastructure, availability of textbooks and learning materials, and competence and training of teachers. Investing in early childhood education can also help to improve subsequent learning achievement. Panama, for instance, targets four and five-year-old children through three separate formal and non-formal programmes, and plans to extend its early-childhood education network in order to reach more, and younger, children.

30. One element that affects the quality of schooling is gender stereotypes. Gender bias in formal curricula and textbooks can contribute to gender segregation in students' career choices. A comparative analysis of studies of three developing countries revealed that, regardless of geographic boundaries or levels of patriarchy, textbooks underrepresented women in words and illustrations and conveyed gender stereotypes about occupational and domestic roles as well as individual attributes and actions.[28] While progress has generally been made in eliminating blatant sexism

[27] UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, "Ensuring equitable lifelong learning opportunities", paper prepared for the Beijing + 15 UNESCO online discussion on gender equality, education and training.

[28] R. L. Blumberg (2007). Gender bias in textbooks: a hidden obstacle on the road to equality in education. Background paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008.

from textbooks and curricula, more efforts are needed to increase the portrayal of both women and men in less stereotyped roles at all levels of education.[7]

31. A number of countries, including Greece, Malta, Montenegro, Spain and Turkey, have reviewed and revised school curricula and textbooks to eliminate stereotypes. In some cases, such as in Malaysia, the Ministry of Education provided guidelines to writers and publishers of school textbooks to eliminate gender stereotypes (CEDAW/C/MYS/CO/2). In Brazil, the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women and the Ministry of Education provided criteria for the selection of textbooks for grades one to four. Books not only had to avoid negative stereotypes, but also foster an education based on gender equality (CEDAW/C/BRA/6). In Belgium, the Ministries of Equal Opportunities and of Education have collaborated in the development of a manual to help teachers, inspectors, publishers, authors and education providers detect sexist stereotypes in textbooks. In Ecuador, the National Women's Council gave technical assistance to the Ministry of Education for incorporating a gender and women's human rights focus in education materials for its literacy and basic education programmes.

32. Acknowledging that gender stereotypes can be perpetuated by teachers, a number of countries, including Cambodia, Greece, Grenada and Slovakia, introduced initiatives to sensitize teachers and other educational personnel to gender equality issues. Spain developed an Internet-based education portal as a virtual space for education managers and other stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences of gender-differentiated approaches to education. In Belgium, initial training of primary teachers includes a 30-hour course on gender sensitization. In addition, since 2006, teachers in Belgium have been offered training in gender and sexual diversity with a view to deconstructing stereotypes, introducing pedagogic materials from a gender perspective, testing pedagogic tools for sensitization and promoting neutral pedagogic attitudes. Other initiatives to eliminate gender stereotypes included a project on facilitating equality through education in Malta, which included training seminars on the principles of gender equality and work/life balance targeted at policymakers, teachers and students, as well as general awareness-raising programmes in Jamaica.

33. Both female and male teachers are critical for addressing gender stereotypes by serving as role models for young girls and boys. However, female teachers are overrepresented in lower levels of education and tend to be clustered in urban schools, in particular in developing countries. The global average for female teachers in 2005 was 94 per cent in pre-primary, 62 per cent in primary, 53 per cent in secondary and 41 per cent in tertiary education.[13] Some countries, however, lack female teachers at lower levels of education. In response, Zambia, for instance, requires that 51 per cent of students enrolled in teacher training colleges be female and 49 per cent male, which has helped to raise the number of women teachers, in particular in rural areas. Other countries are attempting to recruit male teachers. The Netherlands tries to make primary teaching more attractive for men, including by raising salaries. In an effort to create role models for boys and to open up new employment opportunities for men, Germany has taken measures to increase the number of male professionals in early childhood education, including through retraining men interested in entering the profession, as well as disseminating information about related initiatives.

34. Measures have also been taken to increase the number of female professors at universities, including by providing financial incentives. Germany launched a "Women Professors" programme which invited universities to submit their equal opportunity plans to receive funding for up to three women professors. Similarly, Belgium established a new system of university funding, which is partly based on increasing the number of female professors, while Switzerland established a target of 25 per cent female professors at universities and provided economic incentives to universities for appointing female professors.

35. Gender stereotypes may be contributing to boys' underachievement in education in some regions, including in terms of performance, retention and participation in tertiary education. A recent report in Sweden has shown that girls receive better grades than boys, and that boys have a greater risk of being diagnosed with behavioural problems requiring remedial intervention. In Grenada, measures to address this issue included public sensitization, support workshops, personal development and anger management training. While there is a risk that the underachievement of boys leads to a reduced focus on girls, it also provides an opportunity for better integration of gender perspectives in education, as illustrated by Belgium's Venus project. While the project's starting point was a concern for boys' performance in secondary school, it identified concrete practices that better motivated both boys and girls to learn.

**Non-formal education and training**

36. Non-formal training remains an important complement to the formal education system. It can reach out-of-school women and girls, and is particularly important in countries affected by emergencies. According to a survey by the United Kingdom Department for International Development, 30 to 40 per cent of women participants in adult literacy programmes develop higher self-esteem and confidence in contributing to family decisions and participating in local public affairs.[29]

37. Non-formal education is a critical tool for eradicating illiteracy among adult women. Pakistan strengthened the gender dimension of its literacy programmes through a review of national policies and programmes. Research was conducted on the root causes of low literacy among women, an advocacy toolkit on gender mainstreaming in literacy programmes was developed, and policymakers and community leaders were sensitized to the importance of female literacy for national development.[2] Through Turkey's "Mother and girl at school" literacy campaign, the Ministry of National Education, municipalities and non-governmental organizations offered women literacy courses and skills training through vocational and technical schools and institutions. Paraguay conducted gender-sensitive literacy campaigns targeting both women and men in local communities. Djibouti conducted various literacy campaigns focused on women's empowerment, which resulted in around 17,000 women and adolescent girls acquiring basic numeracy and essential reading skills.

[29] United Kingdom Department for International Development, "Adult literacy: an update", DFID practice paper, August 2008.

38. A key weakness of the existing non-formal training programmes is that they are often not based on an assessment of local market opportunities[30] and are offered even in the absence of related jobs in the market. Furthermore, they often remain within the boundaries of gender stereotypes by training girls and women in traditionally female occupations, such as hairstyling or dressmaking.[26]

39. Recognizing this, Belgium supported a vocational training project in Senegal for women, who left school after primary or lower secondary education, or who were illiterate, which offered skills training tailored to the needs and potential of the local labour market. In Cambodia, the post-harvest technology and skills bridging programme for the rural poor provided school dropouts, in particular girls, with intensive courses to complete an equivalent level of grade nine certificates to enable them to enrol in any relevant vocational school. The Ministry of Commerce of China, in collaboration with the United Kingdom Department for International Development, provided technical skills training and capacity-building to 15- to 18-year-old rural girls who had previously dropped out of school in a number of provinces.

40. Information and communication technology has expanded the possibilities for distance education. For example, Paraguay implemented a programme of audiovisual-based literacy training. Distance education must, however, take into account the various constraints that women may face. For example, a project on e-learning and distance education for women living in rural areas in Turkey was successful only after adding face-to-face instruction, childcare services, transport to learning centres and the provision of food to the women and their children.[31]

# IV. Women's access to and participation in full employment and decent work

## Overview

41. While education has many non-market benefits, it is commonly expected to lead to improved productivity and higher earnings. As countries are progressing towards gender parity in school enrolment, one would expect to see these gains reflected in the labour market. However, while women's labour force participation has increased, it has not done so on the scale expected from improvements made in education. Despite the increase in the share of women in paid employment outside the agricultural sector, female labour force participation was estimated to be 52.6 per cent in 2008, compared with a male participation rate of 77.5 per cent. Among the 20- to 24-year-old population, women continue to lag behind men in labour force participation in all regions, with South Asia recording the greatest gap, namely 82 per cent of men and 27 per cent of women employed or seeking employment.[32]

42. Even in regions with high rates of school attendance for both girls and boys, such as Latin America, Europe, Central and East Asia and the Pacific, labour force

[30] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Youth Report 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges* (United Nations publication Sales No. E.07.IV.1).

[31] Commission on the Status of Women, fifty-fourth session, moderator's summary for the panel in preparation for the 2011 session of the Commission.

[32] World Bank, "Equality for women: where do we stand?" (Washington, D.C., 2008).

participation is much lower for women than men.[32] Similarly, even though the Middle East and North Africa region has made significant progress in educational outcomes for girls and women, women's labour force participation remains below 30 per cent.[33]

43. At the same time, the global unemployment rate for women is higher than for men; it was estimated at 7 per cent versus 6.3 per cent in 2009.[34] One third of women between 15 and 24 years old in developing countries are "jobless", that is, they are either not employed and actively seeking work, or out of the labour force and not in school, compared with one fifth of young men.[34] According to a study of a large number of developing countries, being involved in unpaid work or home-based enterprise was an important reason for young women not to enter the labour market.[35]

44. While women's employment opportunities have increased, although not on par with educational gains, the quality of employment has not improved much. Progress towards full employment is not always connected to decent work: women may be entering the labour market, but in jobs that do not guarantee rights to workers, extend social protection or promote social dialogue.

45. As of 2009, 51.2 per cent of female workers were in vulnerable employment, compared with 55.9 per cent 10 years earlier. Even though the share in vulnerable employment is also high for men, at 48.2 per cent, women are more than twice as likely as men to be unpaid contributing family workers.[36] Gender wage gaps persist in all parts of the world and are estimated to range from 3 to 51 per cent, with a global average of 17 per cent.[37] In addition, women are overrepresented in part-time work. In the European Union, for example, 31.1 per cent of women worked part-time compared to 7.9 per cent of men in 2008.[38]

46. As a result of the financial and economic crisis, increases in female unemployment rates exceeded those for males between 2008 and 2009 in some regions, such as South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and developed economies.[33] In addition, while the differential impact of the crisis has varied across countries depending on the gender-based job segregation, women often spend more time in both paid and unpaid work to offset the impact on household incomes.[39]

**Increasing women's access to the labour market**

47. According to the ILO school-to-work transition surveys for several countries, young women find the transition more difficult than young men because of limited access to social networks, information channels and job search mechanisms.[40] In

[33] ILO, *Global Employment Trends* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2010).

[34] E. Katz, "Programs promoting young women's employment: what works?" (October 2008).

[35] J. Fares et al., "How are youth faring in the labor market? Evidence from around the World" (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2006).

[36] ILO, "Women in labour markets: measuring progress and identifying challenges" (Geneva, 2010).

[37] International Trade Union Confederation, "The global gender pay gap" (Brussels, 2008).

[38] European Commission, "Equality between women and men" (Brussels, 2010).

[39] United Nations, *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* (New York, 2009).

[40] ILO, *Youth Employment: Breaking Gender Barriers for Young Women and Men* (2008), available at http://www.ilo.org/.

some contexts, social norms can restrict women's physical mobility or make it unacceptable for them to work.[50] In the Middle East and North Africa region, the transition from school to work is particularly difficult for women owing to limited labour market mobility, a mismatch between skills acquired through education and labour market demands, and legal barriers or cultural norms.[51] In Lebanon, for example, women's limited participation in the labour market is attributed to cultural heritage, prevailing mentality and deep-rooted gender stereotypes. Furthermore, employers in some countries may prefer to hire young men rather than young women.[52]

48. School-to-work transition initiatives therefore are imperative to ensure that gains in girls' education are translated into decent work opportunities for young women. To improve women's transition from school or training to work, Germany used gender-sensitive counselling and placement services, gender-sensitive training courses and gender-sensitive labour market policies in its development assistance programmes.

49. In Latin America, programmes have been successful that take into account the social, economic and institutional context in their design, including through assessment of labour market conditions and non-employment-related challenges faced by adolescent girls and young women.[53] The well-targeted and demand-driven Projoven vocational training project in Peru, for example, successfully promoted young women's employment and their equal access to training in non-traditional skills. It also provided additional stipends to cover childcare.[54]

50. Some programmes, such as the adolescent livelihood programmes in South Asian and African countries, not only focused on enhancing labour market skills, but also combined vocational training with reproductive health and other interventions. As women have less access to social networks for information on jobs, job readiness and job search skills are particularly critical for young women to find and keep jobs and therefore should be included in curricula for higher education and vocational training.

51. A number of countries have taken measures to increase women's access to employment through provision of training programmes, development of tools for stakeholders and provision of incentives to employers. Belarus targeted women through hiring fairs to fill vacant positions, provided vocational training and retraining in fields with greater demand and provided loans to employers to create jobs for women. The Public Employment Service of Denmark, through its specialized unit for gender equality, provided tools to job centres and other stakeholders to ensure equal access for women and men to the labour market. Cyprus has implemented a pilot project on flexible employment arrangements to increase women's participation in the labour market, including through subsidizing the labour cost of women.

52. Initiatives must take into account the obstacles faced by some groups of women, such as older women, women living in rural areas and women from minorities, in accessing training opportunities. Many older women, for instance, need to enhance their skills and develop new ones in order to be able to continue to work. Training programmes should take into account their age-related needs and

[51] World Bank, "Bridging the gap: improving capabilities and expanding opportunities for women in the Middle East and North Africa region" (Washington, D.C., 2010).

constraints. The Magna Carta of Women, the gender equality law of the Philippines, mandates the agriculture department and local government units to ensure the participation of women living in rural areas in training programmes on food production. Peru's *Capacitate* programme for professional training for labour market participation emphasized the inclusion of women in training in agricultural and dairy production and food processing. Denmark has taken initiatives to promote the participation of ethnic minority women in education and the labour market, including an integration programme for all newly arrived immigrants which provides labour market training, and a mentoring network. Canada's Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnerships programme brought together aboriginal community leaders and the private sector, major industry leaders, trade unions and learning institutions to strengthen women's equal participation in training and job retention activities.

53. To support women re-entering the labour market after a career break, there is increasing focus on training programmes and support services. Germany's "Vocational reintegration as a perspective" programme helped women to return to work after a long family-related employment break, including through guidance on transition, creating role models, providing special skills and involving employers and women's partners in supportive measures. The Employment and Training Corporation of Malta offered an "Employment for women" course for women seeking to return to the labour market as well as victims of violence and young single mothers. Spain instituted policies for the recognition and certification of professional competencies based on work experience. This has assisted women in returning to study and work in areas such as dependent care work, child education and hospitality and tourism.

**Addressing gender pay gaps and occupational segregation**

54. Women's and girls' educational choices and attainment contribute to the gender pay gap and occupational segregation. As education and training decisions are partly based on the availability of labour market opportunities, occupational segregation can negatively impact women's and girls' educational choices and perpetuate gender stereotypes. Women tend to dominate lower-paying sectors such as teaching and care work and to be underrepresented in traditionally "male" fields, for instance, science and engineering. Their predominance in part-time work and low-skilled jobs also contributes to gender wage gaps.

55. Member States have taken actions to address unequal remuneration. Sweden set a target to eliminate gender pay gaps in the public sector by 2010, including through commissioning the Swedish Administrative Development Agency to set up a programme on women's career development in the public sector (CEDAW/C/SR.826). Poland participated in a European Union-level campaign on the existing gender pay gap, using posters, leaflets and equality days in 2010.

56. In recent years, some countries have shifted the focus of their initiatives on eliminating occupational segregation from increasing girls' participation in non-traditional fields to breaking gender stereotypes for both girls and boys. The Netherlands organized research, debates, conferences and school visits during which games were used to encourage girls and boys to make conscious choices about their studies and careers. The German "New paths for boys", a nationwide networking project, aimed to broaden boys' occupational choices, present flexible male gender

roles and strengthen their social skills. Denmark launched initiatives to recruit and retain men in the care sector. The Administration of Employment of Luxembourg supported girls' and boys' days that informed ninth graders about non-typical professions. On girls' day in Switzerland, girls accompanied their fathers or mothers to work all day, while boys talked with men in classrooms about the sharing of responsibilities at home.

**Reconciliation of work and family life**

57. Despite women's educational gains, their access to employment can be constrained by stereotypical perceptions of men as primary wage earners and women as primary caregivers and secondary earners. The demands on women's care work in some regions are compounded by early marriage and childbearing and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The absence of care services for dependent persons, adequate leave schemes and flexible working arrangements can deter women's participation in the labour market or in full-time work.

58. Policy responses to promote reconciliation of work and family life focused on the redistribution of the burden of unpaid work between women and men, provision of accessible and affordable care services and investments to improve public infrastructure (E/CN.6/2010/2). While policy and legislative interventions that include affordable childcare and maternity, paternity and parental leave provisions are critical to ensure the equitable participation of both women and men in the labour market, they continue to be primarily targeted at women (A/64/162).

59. Outreach and awareness-raising activities, in particular those that highlight the role of fathers in caregiving for children, have been effective in expanding coverage and usage of paternity and parental leaves. Poland's project "Between family and work: reconciliation of women's social and professional roles" consisted of a media campaign, including spots and billboards, books and online publications to change gender stereotypical attitudes.

60. The provision of accessible and affordable care services, including child and elder care, and health services, is also important. Cyprus has developed a network of structures and services to provide quality care services to facilitate reconciliation of work and family life for women and men.

**Enhancing women's entrepreneurship**

61. Entrepreneurship is another employment option for women, providing them an opportunity where their talents, creativity and innovation can flourish.[42] There is, however, a significant gender gap in new venture creation and business ownership. Men are more likely to be involved in entrepreneurial activity than women, in particular in high-income countries.[43] Women entrepreneurs tend to be concentrated in small and precarious enterprises because of their limited access to and control over resources such as land, credit, technology, information and markets.[43] Education and skills training for women are instrumental in enhancing their entrepreneurship potential, including through increasing their capability to use new

[42] ILO (2009). Gender equality at the heart of decent work. Geneva.

[43] J. E. Allen et al., *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor: 2007 Report on Women and Entrepreneurship* (2008), available at www.genconsortium.org.

technologies and boosting the growth potential and sustainability of their businesses.

62. Some Governments have taken initiatives to promote women's entrepreneurship. Denmark has mainstreamed entrepreneurship education into curricula to inspire more girls to become entrepreneurs. In Norway, an action plan to increase entrepreneurship among women aims to raise the proportion of women among new entrepreneurs to at least 40 per cent by 2013. Greece made provisions to allow women entrepreneurs with dependent children or persons with disabilities to claim their house as business property and other relevant expenses as business expense. Nicaragua has offered technical assistance and training in agriculture to small and medium enterprise producers, with 60 per cent of recipients being women producers. The Plurinational State of Bolivia has implemented training in wealth creation, rights and access to capital for indigenous women in agriculture and as handicraft producers.

63. Germany's national agency for women start-ups has served as a central platform that offered information and services for women entrepreneurs. Poland's project "How good to be an enterprising woman" provided women with necessary knowledge of how to start a business, where to seek funds and how to promote the business. The multi-purpose community centres in Turkey provided income-generating and skills training courses to an average of 3,000 women in a year, which led to the establishment of 75 businesses by 121 participants in the last six and a half years. Such projects and training programmes, however, may not be sufficient in some countries to increase women's access to entrepreneurship. Some inheritance and property laws, for example, can discriminate against girls and women and limit their access to productive assets.[44]

## V. Conclusions and recommendations

64. Actions taken on education and training at the national and community levels have resulted in substantial gains for women and girls, particularly in relation to access. The progress made with regard to girls' and women's access to and participation in formal and non-formal education, however, has not sufficiently translated into decent employment opportunities for women. There is a need to regularly evaluate the impact of initiatives at national level to determine the most effective way of reducing gender gaps in education. More attention to young women's transition from school to work is needed in order to ensure that gains in education translate into employment opportunities.

65. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to call upon Governments, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and other relevant actors, as appropriate, to:

(a) Systematically mainstream a gender perspective in all education and employment policies and programmes, including budgeting processes, and monitor and evaluate the impact on women and men of such policies and programmes, including through the use of tools such as gender audits;

[44] A. Morrison et. al., "Gender equality, poverty, and economic growth", Policy Research Working Paper No. 4349 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2007).

(b) Adopt and/or review and fully implement, in collaboration with all stakeholders, gender-sensitive legislation and policies on education and employment that address the root causes of horizontal and vertical occupational segregation and gender-based wage gaps;

(c) Review gaps and address barriers to the implementation of policies aimed at ensuring full and equal access of women and girls to formal and non-formal education at all levels, including technical and vocational, adult and long-distance education and training, as well as literacy programmes;

(d) Take measures to eliminate inequalities related to age, poverty, geographical location, language, ethnicity, religion and disability affecting women and girls in access to and participation in education at all levels;

(e) Provide incentives for schools and universities to develop gender equality policies, including on human resources issues, curriculum development and the creation of a conducive learning environment for girls and women, boys and men;

(f) Remove economic barriers to girls' education, including by providing financial incentives and eliminating school fees, and through a well-planned and well-managed process that addresses subsequent increases in enrolment and reductions in school income;

(g) Expand social support for girls' schooling, especially at the secondary level, including by targeting community leaders and parents through awareness-raising campaigns;

(h) Improve the safety of girls at and on the way to school, including by providing infrastructure such as transportation, separate toilets and improved lighting, establishing and enforcing sanctions for violence against girls, and conducting violence prevention activities in schools and communities;

(i) Develop and strengthen infrastructure, including alternative energy sources, water and electricity, to reduce the burden of domestic activities and free girls and women to engage in educational or productive activities;

(j) Eliminate gender stereotypes in textbooks and curricula, including by assessing the impact of gender biases on girls and boys and developing gender-sensitive educational material;

(k) Improve the relevance and quality of education at all levels for both girls and boys, including through teacher training, teaching methodologies and curriculum development, and implement programmes to improve achievement for the most disadvantaged learners;

(l) Ensure women's and girls' equal access to technical and vocational training, including apprenticeship, by providing financial incentives, conducting awareness-raising activities, ensuring flexible schedules and gender-sensitive methodologies;

(m) Ensure that educational, training and employment opportunities are available to women and girls who have interrupted their schooling or employment, including through the formal recognition of prior learning and work experience;

(n) Ensure that formal and non-formal education, skills development, vocational training and retraining opportunities available to women meet the demands of the labour market;

(o) Ensure that secondary and tertiary institutions, as well as targeted school-to-work transition programmes, equip women and girls with job readiness and job search skills and provide career guidance;

(p) Remove barriers to women's entrepreneurship by ensuring access to business administration and information technology training, and financial instruments, as well as facilitating networking and information-sharing;

(q) Undertake legislative and administrative reforms in order to give women full and equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property, credit, natural resources and technologies;

(r) Adopt and enforce the principles of decent work in both the formal and informal sectors, as contained in relevant ILO conventions, including develop and improving gender-responsive social protection schemes, such as social insurance and pension schemes, that meet basic minimum needs throughout the life cycle;

(s) Adopt and implement legislation and policies to promote the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities for both women and men, including through flexibility in working arrangements, paid maternity, paternity, parental and other forms of leave and provision of care facilities;

(t) Encourage and accelerate the development of statistical indicators and data disaggregated by sex and age to inform policymaking on education and employment, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of these recommendations and resulting actions.

United Nations E/CN.6/2011/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 December 2010

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February–4 March 2011
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern, and further actions and initiatives**

# Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report summarizes the situation of Palestinian women between 1 September 2009 and 30 September 2010, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/6. It reviews the situation of Palestinian women and provides an overview of the assistance provided by entities of the United Nations system with regard to education and training; health; economic empowerment and livelihoods; violence against women; power and decision-making; and institutional arrangements. The report concludes with recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women.

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

10-68649 (E) 070111

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# I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2010/6 on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, the Economic and Social Council expressed deep concern about the grave situation of Palestinian women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. It requested the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation in order to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those set out by the Secretary-General in his previous report on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2010/4), and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fifth session a report, including information provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report covers the period from 1 September 2009 to 30 September 2010 and reviews the situation of Palestinian women based on information from United Nations entities or individual experts that monitor the situation of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

3. Unless indicated otherwise, the report is based on contributions and information submitted by entities of the United Nations system that provide assistance to Palestinian women, including ESCWA, the United Nations country team for the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. In this regard, the United Nations country team has coordinated contributions to the report by the following United Nations entities: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now part of UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

# II. Situation of Palestinian women

4. The reporting period was characterized by efforts to resume negotiations between the parties on all permanent status issues, a volatile situation on the ground throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the deepening divide between Gaza and the West Bank (see A/65/35, para. 4). Systematic engagement by the United States of America and other members of the Quartet with the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships and other stakeholders in the region led to the resumption of direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians on 2 September 2010. That had been preceded by several rounds of proximity talks assisted by the United States. The League of Arab States also engaged actively within the framework of the Arab Peace Initiative, including meetings with the Quartet (ibid., para. 5).

5. The consequences of years of occupation and conflict and multiple political and economic crises in 2009, particularly in Gaza where the Israeli military operation "Cast Lead" undermined social services, infrastructure and homes, continued to be felt.[1] While initial estimates indicate that economic growth accelerated in 2009 and real growth in the West Bank and Gaza was about 6.7 per cent, conditions in the Gaza Strip remained difficult.[2] Changes in Israeli policy regarding entry of material — from a "positive" list of goods allowed into Gaza to a "negative" list of items that would be prohibited or restricted from entry — brought some relief to the population, but remained insufficient to address the full range of socio-economic needs.[3]

6. The expansion of Israeli settlements continued in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (see A/65/35, para. 5). A total of 230 cases of house demolitions and evictions were documented through August 2010 in East Jerusalem and "Area C".[3] As of July 2010, approximately 61 per cent of the barrier had been completed. In contradiction to the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, the barrier continues to deviate significantly from the 1967 Green Line into Occupied Palestinian Territory in the West Bank. When completed, approximately 85 per cent of the barrier will run inside the West Bank (see A/65/35, para. 34). Free movement in the West Bank continued to be obstructed by Israel even though the number of checkpoints was reduced (ibid., para. 7) during the reporting period, contributing to greater freedom of movement between Palestinian urban centres, East Jerusalem excluded.[3] As at the end of August 2010, there were some 500 closure obstacles throughout the West Bank[4] (compared with 618 in August 2009; see A/65/380, para. 19), where there were continued restrictions preventing Palestinians from using key roads and accessing East Jerusalem as well as other areas isolated by the barrier. Furthermore, there was no improvement regarding access of Palestinians to farming and grazing areas, as well as water resources, located in Area C.[3] The humanitarian needs were becoming more acute due to inadequate water quality. In East Jerusalem and the West Bank water sources were closed off to establish settlements and military zones.[1] Due to its high salinity, 80 per cent of the water supply in Gaza is not fit for human consumption.[1]

7. The divide among major Palestinian factions continued to affect the lives of ordinary Palestinians, especially in Gaza, and prevented Palestinians from uniting in support of the Palestinian Authority (see A/65/35, para. 8). The Gaza Strip remained under the de facto control of Hamas (see A/65/380, para. 26).

8. Although the political situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, related both to the Israeli occupation and to the divide among major Palestinian factions, affects all individuals, women and girls are affected in distinct ways.

9. At the end of 2009, formal labour force participation of women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was among the lowest levels globally: 15.2 per cent

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[1] UNICEF, *Humanitarian Action Report 2010*.

[2] World Bank, Brief on West Bank and Gaza (March 2010).

[3] Contribution of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[4] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Monitor* (August 2010).

in the West Bank, down from 15.8 per cent in the first two quarters of 2009,[5] and 9.1 per cent in the Gaza strip.[6] According to a study conducted by UNESCO and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on market factors that discourage women from joining the labour market, some 60 per cent of women in the formal labour force are employed in education, textiles, clerical work, farming and agriculture. ESCWA reports that the Palestinian National Authority and UNRWA continued to be the two main employers of women.

10. While no legal barriers prevent women from entering into businesses or economic-related contracts, engaging in autonomous economic activity has meant increased mobility for some women. Most must carefully navigate social norms in order to avoid family conflict since women must often obtain the permission of brothers and husbands to work.[7] Few women occupy high-level positions, and wage gaps between women and men persist. Men are given priority in hiring processes, and young women wait four times as long as young men to find work.

11. A survey conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics suggests that the majority of women who are out of the labour force are mostly young (15-34 years of age) married women without children. Some 45 per cent of these women have given up seeking employment (31 per cent in the West Bank and 63 per cent in the Gaza Strip) due to previous unsuccessful job search.[8] However, in the absence of male income security, following high levels of unemployment among men (38.6 per cent in May 2010),[5] additional burdens have been placed on women to earn an income in order to meet the basic needs of their families.

12. Many women, in particular middle-aged women and women with low levels of education, turn to a range of informal activities, from petty trading in Gaza, to grocery shopkeeping, sewing, agriculture and livestock production. Many informal activities have benefited from microcredit schemes introduced by aid agencies, however, with mixed results. In some cases, women borrowed money to support their husbands' economic activities, and in other cases they were constrained by the strict repayment policies of the lender. Lack of raw materials or goods mobility, in combination with a massive decline in people's purchasing power, has imposed challenges on those projects and their success.[7]

13. Imposed movement restrictions and the lack of a means of transport constituted crucial barriers to employment for women. According to case studies conducted in the West Bank and Gaza, public transport covers more than 70 per cent of the transport needs of women.[9] However, the combination of movement restriction and gender stereotypes, schedules that do not meet women's needs and public (verbal or physical) harassments have resulted in restricted access to transport for women. Additionally, a lack of fare integration has led to higher

[5] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Labour Force Survey (October-December 2009): Round (Q4/2009)", cited in the contribution received from the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[6] UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, "MDG attainment in the Palestinian context" (2010).

[7] World Bank, Brief on checkpoints and barriers (2010).

[8] According to a Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics study cited in the contribution received from the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[9] World Bank, "Gender and transport in MENA: case studies from West Bank, Gaza and Yemen", MENA Knowledge and Learning Quick Notes Series, No. 21, March 2010.

transport costs for women (approximately 15 to 20 per cent higher than for men) and for poor people living at the outskirts of towns since they are forced to take multiple means of transportation to reach their destinations.[9]

14. High unemployment levels among women do not only impose economic hardship on women but also tend to lead to high levels of food insecurity. Other factors include large families, higher proportions of women and children and low levels of education. As a result, food insecurity affects 61 per cent of Gaza Strip households and 25 per cent of West Bank households, with higher rates of food insecurity among female-headed households than male-headed households in both the Gaza Strip (68 and 60 per cent) and the West Bank (27 and 22 per cent), respectively. Age is an important factor in the level of food insecurity among female-headed households since older women are less likely to find employment than younger ones. For example, the average age of women heads of food-insecure households is 62 and 56 years in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, respectively.[10]

15. Access to education, training and recreational activities remained critical for the economic empowerment and well-being of women. Available data show that while the overall quality of education available to women is variable, access to and participation in education by women is increasing.[11] The Occupied Palestinian Territory ranked in the medium range (76 out of 128) of the Education for All Development Index,[12] and the enrolment rate and performance of girls has improved. In the 2009/2010 academic year, girls represented 47.9 per cent of the total student population in UNRWA-run schools in the Gaza Strip and 57.5 per cent in the West Bank.[13] Approximately 62 per cent of all teachers in basic education were women.[3] The ongoing conflict, insecurity and movement restrictions, however, continued to pose serious challenges to women's and girls' access to education, training and recreational activities.

16. Gender stereotypes continued to constrain women's access to education and training and have an impact on the choice of education and training courses with concentrations of females and males in distinct fields of study. Curricula, especially in secondary schools, contributed to the portrayal of stereotypical roles for women and men.[3] Girls are also encouraged by their parents to pursue education paths that are in line with their perceived future roles as mothers and caregivers.[3] Dropout rates were higher for boys at the primary level (1.3 per cent, compared with 0.5 per cent for girls), and higher for girls at the secondary level (3.8 per cent, compared with 3.0 per cent for boys).[11] Concerns remained regarding the linkage between the rate of girl dropouts at the secondary level of education and at early marriage.[3]

17. Illiteracy remained a serious obstacle hindering women's economic and political empowerment. While only 1 per cent of youth (15-24 years) was illiterate, illiteracy among adults was much higher, with 75.6 per cent of all illiterate adults

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[10] Socio-economic and food security survey conducted by FAO/WFP on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, cited in the contribution received from the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[11] ESCWA, "Social and economic situation of Palestinian women: 2006-2009" (E/ESCWA/ECW/2009/Technical Paper.1) (May 2009).

[12] The Education for All Development Index provides a composite measure of progress, encompassing access, equity and quality; see UNESCO *Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Reaching the Marginalized* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010).

[13] UNRWA, "UNRWA in figures" as of 1 January 2010.

being women.[14] Illiteracy rates among food-insecure heads of households were notably high, with 64 per cent in the West Bank and 34 per cent in the Gaza Strip.[10]

18. Health conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are closely linked to the socio-economic consequences of the occupation. Acute and chronic forms of malnutrition continued to pose major problems, in particular in the Gaza Strip. Post-traumatic stress and other psychological and behavioural disorders are an emerging health priority.[15]

19. Significant concerns persisted with regard to maternal and child health due to mobility constraints and insufficient infrastructure. Many pregnant women were unable to reach UNRWA health centres on time because of movement restrictions.[15] According to UNIFEM, difficulties in accessing medical facilities were more acute for rural women, given the number of checkpoints between villages and the lack of hospitals in rural areas (see A/HRC/13/68/Rev.1, para. 10).

20. Due to a shortage of delivery beds, inadequate conditions and space in delivery rooms, and inadequate basic facilities, most women were being discharged one to two hours after normal delivery.[3] While the United Nations does not maintain a specific monitoring mechanism on the issue of Palestinian women giving birth at Israeli checkpoints, no births at checkpoints have been reported by the Palestinian Authority and Israel since January 2009 (see A/HRC/13/68/Rev.1, paras. 7-9).

21. The political and economic conditions affected women's and girls' health and nutrition, particularly in the Gaza Strip. Food insecurity contributed to micronutrient deficiency and high levels of anaemia in infants and pregnant women.[16] In herding communities in Area C, stunting reached up to 38 per cent of children aged 6 to 17 months. Of the surveyed girls, 7.8 per cent suffered from acute malnutrition, compared with 4.8 per cent of boys; 16.7 per cent girls compared with 14.1 per cent boys were acutely underweight.[17] The prevalence of anaemia increased among 9-12-month old infants, from 49 per cent in 2008 to 57 per cent in 2009.[18]

22. Mental health issues affected women both as primary caregivers and as patients. In families with mentally ill members, women bore the brunt of the care. Women made up the majority of professional mental health providers who worked often under substandard conditions.[18] Some 30 per cent of children screened at UNRWA schools were reported to have mental health problems (A/HRC/12/48, para. 1282). Several reports emphasized that poverty and movement constraints left women unable to care for their children and relatives leading to anxiety, panic attacks, disturbed sleep and eating patterns, and depression (A/HRC/12/48, para. 1280).[19]

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[14] UNESCO, *Global Education Digest 2010: Comparing Education Statistics Across the World* (Montreal, Canada, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010). Available from http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/ged/2010/GED_2010_EN.pdf.

[15] WHO, "Health conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan" (Sixty-third World Health Assembly (A63/INF.DOC./6), 2010).

[16] UNICEF, "Humanitarian action 2010: mid-year review: Occupied Palestinian Territory".

[17] "Food security and nutrition survey of herding communities in Area C", joint UNRWA/UNICEF/WFP household survey, April 2010.

[18] Ministry of Health, nutrition surveillance system (2009).

[19] See also UNIFEM, *Voicing the Needs of Women and Men in Gaza: Beyond the Aftermath of the 23-Day Israeli Military Operations* (2009).

23. Palestinian women continued to be exposed to different forms of violence, including those related to the ongoing Israeli occupation and factional tensions, as well as domestic violence, so-called "honour" killings and trafficking. During the reporting period, out of a total of 68 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces and settlers one was a woman, and among 215 injured persons 90 were women.[20] Fear of Israeli violence, as well as the Palestinian factional conflict, is a daily source of stress and insecurity for the entire population.[21]

24. Data on violence against women remains scarce. Women and girls are reluctant to resort to women's and human rights organizations, the police and courts for a number of reasons, including the lack of awareness of the availability of assistance mechanisms and the strong stigma attached to reporting abuse. According to non-governmental organizations, forensic clinic data confirmed 499 cases of rape; 13 women had been killed in so-called "honour" killings in 2009 (nine in the West Bank and four in Gaza); and 126 women had left their homes due to sexual harassment, rape or physical abuse by a family member.[22]

25. The current legal framework in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is a significant obstacle to gender equality.[21] While the Palestinian Basic Law, which is the main source of legislation, establishes that Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary without distinction based upon sex,[23] gender-based discrimination persists in law in a range of areas, including the penal code and laws on marriage, divorce, custody of children and inheritance. For example, in the West Bank, the law provides for a reduced sentence with respect to an offence in a "state of great fury".[24] Laws in force in both the West Bank[25] and the Gaza Strip[26] relieve rapists who marry their victim of any criminal responsibility. None of the existing laws cover marital rape.[21] In addition, weaknesses in the judicial systems have led to an increase in the use of customary law, at times to the detriment of women's rights.[21]

26. A draft national strategy to combat violence against women has been developed, but not yet finalized. It promotes a legal framework and institutional mechanisms to protect women from violence and also promotes improved social protection and health services for women victims of violence. In the field of law enforcement, the Palestinian Cabinet requested in February 2010 that the President suspend legal provisions on "family honour".[3]

27. There is growing support among Palestinians for women's rights and gender equality. A UNDP survey revealed that Palestinian attitudes towards women's rights

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[20] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Protection of civilians" database, 1 October 2009-24 August 2010, cited in the contribution of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[21] UNDP, "MDG attainment in the Palestinian context" (see footnote 6).

[22] Numbers and figures presented by the Al-Muntada Coalition of Palestinian non-governmental organizations at the violence against women workshop, January 2010; cited in the contribution of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[23] Article 9 of the Amended Basic Law (promulgated 18 March 2003), published in the *Palestine Official Gazette Special* issue No. 2 (19 March 2003).

[24] Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 (1960), article 98, cited in UNDP, "MDG attainment in the Palestinian context".

[25] Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 (1960), article 308, cited in UNDP, "MDG attainment in the Palestinian context".

[26] Egyptian Penal Law No. 58 (1936), article 291, "MDG attainment in the Palestinian context".

exhibited strong support for a revision of the legal code in order to boost women's equality. 70-80 per cent of survey respondents stated that women should be equal to men before the court, the law, at home and at work.[27] Based on a joint study by UNESCO and the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Palestinian political representatives are gradually recognizing their responsibility for gender equality issues and starting to take actions towards the advancement of women.[28] In addition, a regional initiative between the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt, and non-governmental organizations in February 2010 discussed amendments of the Personal Law (marriage age, child custody, legal status for women, shared budget and divorce).[29]

28. Palestinian women participate in both formal and informal realms of political life. In 2009, women represented 20 per cent of the ministers of the Palestinian Authority.[30] Women's informal participation in political parties has been significant, at least in terms of visibility and effectiveness, if not in terms of numbers. With the factional split and the freeze of the Palestinian Legislative Council in 2006, efforts to promote women's political participation drastically decreased, including with regard to women's active role in peacebuilding and negotiation. Though women were in leadership roles within the Palestinian Authority and the de facto authority, they were often excluded from strategic meetings and decision-making processes, absent from the internal political reconciliation process[30] and did not participate in permanent status negotiations.[31]

29. A cornerstone of Palestinian social, economic and political activity has been the multifaceted volunteer work done by women's associations, which have not only organized to promote peace and political change but also implemented practical projects targeted to support communities to meet their daily needs. These associations have undertaken diverse work, including establishing nursery schools and kindergartens in an attempt to facilitate women's integration into the public sphere and to improve parenting practices and childcare; offering legal advice; challenging patriarchal assumptions about women's capacities and rights including through popular education campaigns; organizing protests and building strategic partnerships with Israeli women in the peace movement.[32] According to data made available by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, representation by

[27] UNDP, "Palestinian perception toward the human security situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory".

[28] UNESCO Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center, descriptive report on the main survey regarding knowledge, perceptions and practices of Palestinian Legislative Council members towards gender (June 2010), cited in the contribution of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[29] Contribution of ESCWA to the present report.

[30] United Nations, UNIFEM and UNDP, *Women Count for Peace: the 2010 Open Days on Women, Peace and Security* (September 2010).

[31] ESCWA, joint study on the theme "Status of Arab women: means to strengthen the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding" (December 2009).

[32] See Manal A. Jamal, "Gender and human security: Palestine revisited", Working Paper Series, No. 08-09 (Dubai, Dubai School of Government, 2008); Cynthia Cockburn, *From Where We Stand: War, Women's Activism and Feminist Analysis* (London, Zed Books, 2007), cited in the UNDP publication *Human Development Report 2009/10: Investing in Human Security for a Future State* (2010).

Palestinian women in decision-making positions such as boards of trustees and board members of non-governmental organizations was approximately 30 per cent.

30. According to information made available by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in April 2010, 34 women were held by Israel in detention centres and prisons, where they were reportedly deprived of medical treatment (see A/65/35, para. 35). As of August 2010 there were 23 Palestinian women held in Palestinian prisons in the West Bank where access to basic material needs and respect for the rule of law were limited.[33] The gendered effects of detention are manifold given women's and men's different roles and responsibilities in dealing with the effects of imprisonment of family members. Women shoulder the responsibility of maintaining households and raising children when male family members are detained.[34]

## III. Assistance to Palestinian women

31. The overall environment of occupation and conflict, movement restrictions and violence continued to be cross-cutting issues that permeated every aspect of Palestinian women's lives. Despite some positive developments, the overall humanitarian needs in parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained acute. Limits to women's movement affect their access to health care, education and socio-economic opportunities and their ability to participate in decision-making processes as well as their caregiving and domestic work.

32. Such conditions have to be considered in terms of the assistance provided to Palestinian women by United Nations entities. Section III sets out six key areas: education and training, health, economic empowerment and livelihoods, violence against women, power and decision-making and institutional arrangements.

### A. Education and training

33. United Nations entities continued to develop and implement a range of initiatives to improve access of women and girls to education, training and recreational activities, including provision of scholarships for universities and vocational education and training to strengthen women's participation in the economy and labour force. In 2009/2010, through the UNRWA Department of Education, 533 female students benefited from technical and vocational education and training at the Ramallah Women Training Centre and 357 benefited in the Gaza Strip. UNRWA promoted women's rights and gender equality as universal human rights values through its human rights curricula for grades 1 to 9. UNIFEM offered educational services at community-based women's centres in remote areas of the West Bank and provided 100 young girls and women in the localities of Auja and Fasayel in the Jordan Valley with literacy classes, computer training and English language courses.

[33] UNIFEM project on protection of Palestinian female prisoners and detainees in Palestinian prisons, cited in the contribution of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the present report.

[34] Institute of Women's Studies, Birzeit University, "The impact of Israeli mobility restrictions and violence on gender relations in Palestinian society: 2000-2007", cited in the UNDP publication *Human Development Report 2009/10: Investing in Human Security for a Future State* (2010).

34. The United Nations Children's Fund supported 4,000 female students with life skills education, such as conflict management and team skills, and provided recreational activities for 300 low-performing schools, targeting more than 11,000 female students in grades 2 to 6. Through its 100 adolescent-friendly centres, UNICEF offered educational and recreational activities to more than 20,000 young women. During the reporting period a total of 12,931 women accessed the UNRWA project on social and recreational spaces for women and girls in the Gaza Strip, where they engaged in discussion forums in and classes in such areas as the arts, sports, skills-building, computers and literacy. UNRWA ran its fourth Summer Games programme, providing over 250,000 children in the Gaza Strip with sports and arts activities, raising awareness within the community of the importance of physical exercise for girls and providing girls with spaces (e.g., swimming) they are not ordinarily able to access.[7] On two occasions, facilities of the Summer Games were attacked by armed and masked men, but UNRWA ensured the successful continuation of the Games.

## B. Health

35. UNRWA continued to be the main comprehensive primary health-care provider for Palestinian refugees and continued to promote a comprehensive life cycle approach to health with a strong focus on primary health care and prevention. A number of United Nations entities supported improved access to health services in the area of reproductive health.

36. Building on a pilot project aimed at improving the quality of maternal and newborn health in two hospitals in the Gaza Strip in 2010, WHO expanded the project activities to another six hospitals in the Gaza Strip. An estimated 24,000 mothers have benefited from the project activities since the launch of the pilot phase in April 2009. The project managed to increase the mother's stay at the hospital from one hour to up to six hours. Medical checkups were performed for mothers and newborns, early initiation of breastfeeding was encouraged, and basic health education messages were provided for both the health of mothers and newborns.

37. In terms of direct services, UNICEF delivered micronutrient supplementation to more than 50,000 pregnant women and 55,000 children. UNRWA delivered food aid to 7,838 pregnant women and nursing mothers. Maternal health-care services were provided to refugees in 20 primary health-care centres across the Gaza Strip. Additionally, family planning services were provided to about 23,141 clients.

38. The United Nations Children's Fund, WHO and UNFPA worked on improving infrastructure, processes and skills among maternal care providers, in direct cooperation with the Ministry of Health. With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry developed a reproductive health handbook and equipped six neonatal units targeting 10,000 high-risk newborns.[7] Female health workers were trained on the integrated management of childhood illnesses as well as on breastfeeding practices and nutrition protocols for severe acute malnutrition. Activities were also undertaken to raise women's awareness of breast cancer and to promote self-examination. From March to July 2010, over 6,000 women were screened for breast cancer. In that context, WHO presented the first Palestinian 3-D animated movie based on a true story about Fatenah, a breast cancer survivor. More than 200 training sessions were held for more than 3,000 doctors and nurses (three quarters of whom were women).

In order to break the professional isolation of Gaza Strip health professionals, WHO supported training for doctors and nurses in modern practices in maternal and neonatal health care in cooperation with the Al Makased Hospital in East Jerusalem. In cooperation with the Directorate of Hospitals, UNFPA organized training in emergency obstetric care protocols for all Ministry of Health maternity workers in the West Bank and in two maternity wards in Gaza (see A/65/77-E/2010/56, para. 37). UNFPA also continued to provide equipment, medications, and supplies to isolated communities.

39. In regard to other areas of health, UNFPA provided clinical and psychosocial services and health education to 30,000 women in the most underprivileged areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip through support provided to four women's health centres. The UNRWA community mental health programme in the West Bank included group, individual and peer-to-peer counselling. A total of 37,668 beneficiaries (of which 71 per cent were women and girls) participated in group activities, and 109,612 beneficiaries (of which 61 per cent were women and girls) in individual counselling from January to September 2010. UNICEF provided psychosocial support to more than 16,000 women and 10,000 girls. The work of UNDP on HIV/AIDS continued under the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

## C. Economic empowerment and livelihoods

40. Assistance by United Nations entities concentrated on covering basic livelihood needs and job creation and on enhancing women's access to entrepreneurship, particularly in rural areas and agriculture. UNRWA and FAO focused on households with female or no breadwinners. Female-headed households accounted for approximately 50 per cent of beneficiaries of the WFP Social Hardship Cases General Food Distribution programme. In addition, WFP provided daily supplementary food items to 63,312 and 92,454 students in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, respectively. In the West Bank, WFP worked with women's centres that prepared the school snacks in exchange for cash and WFP food baskets.

41. As one of the largest employers in the area, UNRWA employed more than 10,000 staff members in its operations across the Gaza Strip. In addition, 35 per cent of all beneficiaries of the UNRWA emergency job creation programme were women, who were trained in embroidery, recycling and honey production, and who were recruited as skilled and unskilled labourers. UNIFEM and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education carried out the second phase of the women community-based school canteen project, which provided healthy school snacks. It targeted 230 schools and involved 28 women's organizations in 12 districts. The programme highlights the economic contributions of women and women's centres, while improving the health of schoolchildren.

42. To enhance women's economic opportunities, support was also directed towards women's entrepreneurship and access to credit. During the reporting period, the UNRWA Microfinance and Microenterprise Department in the Gaza Strip disbursed 1,126 loans to female entrepreneurs (out of a total of 3,080 loans). Women received more loans than men in the agricultural and industrial sectors, and represented more than one third of participants (585 out of 1,609) in microenterprise

trainings. UNRWA also provided 12 grants to women to enable them to begin income-generating projects.

43. The Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Palestinian Occupied Territory (MDG-F)[35] launched a gender equality employment strategy. A series of measures were implemented, including three needs assessments for vocational education centres and women cooperatives, and the training of 27 women leaders and 15 gender audit certified trainers. A training workshop on gender and international labour standards was held, focusing on gender equality in the workplace.

44. A number of programmes implemented during the reporting period specifically addressed the role of Palestinian women in agriculture. For example, FAO focused on boosting fruit and vegetable cultivation and on improving water management and income-generation for female-headed households. Livelihood skills for youth were enhanced through the FAO Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools project, which were implemented in 26 schools throughout the West Bank and Gaza, benefiting 1,200 girls and boys by teaching both agricultural and life skills (see A/65/77-E/2010/56, para. 51). UNIFEM provided rural women with business counselling/training to enable them to better manage their own small income-generating projects.

## D. Violence against women

45. With assistance from United Nations entities, 50 social workers of the Ministry of Social Affairs were trained in ways to combat violence against women, an existing helpline was upgraded and a coalition of women's and human rights organizations was established (Amal Coalition to Combat Violence against Women in the Gaza Strip). Additionally, staff of the Palestinian Legislative Council were trained on the collection and analysis of data of violence against women.

46. As a result of a conference on so-called "honour" crimes organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in March 2010, a task force was established comprising representatives from the Palestinian Authority, United Nations entities and civil society organizations. The task force is to address the issue throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Within the framework of the global campaign entitled "16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence", and as part of the campaign of the Secretary-General entitled "UNiTe to End Violence against Women", UNIFEM organized in Ramallah in December 2009 the second festival to combat violence against women, which was attended by more than 800 people and supported by 10 United Nations agencies. In that context, MDG-F organized the joint campaign entitled "Women and Men are a Nation: Together to End Violence against Women" in the Gaza Strip, which included a festival, radio spots, a mural painting and a study day.

47. With regard to assistance for survivors, UNIFEM continued to support the Mehwar Centre in Bethlehem, a multi-purpose service structure addressing violence

[35] UNIFEM, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNRWA and ILO established the joint Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Joint Programme, "Gender equality and women's empowerment in the Palestinian Occupied Territory". Unless otherwise indicated in the present report, "MDG-F" refers to that programme.

against women in a holistic way. During the reporting period, a total of 93 cases of "at-risk" women, women survivors of domestic violence and 17 children were sheltered and received psychosocial, legal, health, vocational and socio-educational counselling. UNFPA continued to provide outreach psychosocial support through trained social workers in Nablus, Jenin and Jericho municipalities (ibid., para. 50).

48. Implementation of a UNFPA project continued in five selected areas of the West Bank, enhancing the capacity of 20 staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs in the area of violence against women. In a separate initiative under MDG-F, UNFPA provided training to 120 rural women on such issues as gender equality and gender-based violence, facilitating 1,400 regional awareness sessions. UNRWA organized a gender-based violence-training for the staff of Women's Programme Centres, educated 360 teachers on early marriage and conducted separate group discussions for women, men, girls and families from April to September 2010 serving 1,000 participants. A workshop organized by UNRWA, on the theme "Community of practice in building referral systems for women victims of violence", brought together best practice examples in this area.

49. With the support of the Palestinian non-governmental organization Sawa, UNIFEM issued a report entitled "Trafficking and forced prostitution of Palestinian women and girls: forms of modern day slavery", the first of its kind on the issue of trafficking and forced prostitution of Palestinian women and girls.

## E. Power and decision-making

50. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of the participation of Palestinian women in decision-making. The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process emphasized the importance of women's involvement in peace negotiations, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in an op-ed article in the Israeli and Palestinian press and delivered a speech to a committee of the Israeli Knesset. As part of the "Global open day for women, peace and security", held in the context of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), the United Nations Special Coordinator Office for the Middle East Peace Process, UNIFEM and UNFPA met with a number of women peace activists in the Gaza Strip to discuss women's concerns regarding peace and security within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Participants identified four key priorities of Palestinian women, namely: supporting women's political participation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; addressing the increase in domestic violence and all forms of violence against women; supporting the economic empowerment of women; and raising awareness of the humanitarian impact of the occupation and blockade on women and girls.[36] The outcomes of the event were communicated to the Security Council in October 2010.

51. With support of the Government of Spain, UNIFEM and the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Israeli-Palestinian Peace hosted a conference on advancing women's leadership for sustainable peace in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and worldwide, in Madrid on 1 and 2 June 2010.

[36] United Nations, UNIFEM and UNDP (see footnote 30).

52. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia provided training for the Ministry of Women's Affairs on how to draft a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and launched its biennial flagship publication *Status of Arab Women: Means to Strengthen the Role of Women in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding*, which addressed the situation of Palestinian women and changes within traditional gender roles as women have taken on new responsibilities within their families and communities.

53. To strengthen institutional development in the area of women's rights, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council participated in two workshops organized by ESCWA and other partners on the roles of parliamentarians in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

## F. Institutional arrangements

54. Several initiatives were undertaken to support institutional development by the Palestinian Authority and by United Nations entities. These included mainstreaming gender perspectives in cross-sectoral as well as sector-specific plans and programmes in agriculture, justice, culture and humanitarian assistance. Activities focused on capacity-building, awareness-raising and tracking the use of resources.

55. In March 2010, the Palestinian Cabinet endorsed the cross-sectoral national gender strategy within the framework of the Palestinian Development Plan for 2011-2013. The gender strategy, developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, focuses on the gaps and challenges in all sectors and proposes interventions through the collective action of various Palestinian Authority ministries, women's organizations and civil society organizations.

56. The United Nations Development Fund for Women assisted the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development in elaborating the national gender strategy and action plan, as well as in developing national gender indicators related to the strategy's priority policy areas.

57. In the agricultural sector, UNIFEM with the cooperation of FAO assisted the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture to undertake a gender analysis of the agriculture sector strategy, within the framework of the Palestinian Development Plan. FAO continued to work actively with the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Women's Affairs to strengthen responses to the needs of women in agriculture, and involved stakeholders in the dissemination of good practices.

58. United Nations entities supported Palestinian authorities in strengthening capacity on gender mainstreaming. UNDP/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People facilitated a forum among Palestinian Authority ministries, United Nations entities and civil society organizations to discuss gender justice, the promotion of international conventions and instruments on gender equality, and relevant legislation applicable to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Ministries of Women's Affairs and of Labour participated in a training workshop organized by ESCWA on mainstreaming gender in the plans and programmes of the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry of Women's Affairs participated in an expert group meeting on the revision of guidelines to increase the effectiveness of national women's machineries in the ESCWA region.

59. In the area of culture, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, in coordination with programme partners of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund programme on culture and development, organized a workshop on gender mainstreaming and culture to train staff members from several ministries on concepts related to culture and gender mainstreaming, and ways to use such concepts in the development of gender-sensitive cultural policies.

60. In order to track the use of resources to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs supported the roll-out of a gender marker — a tool that measures whether or not the design of a humanitarian project ensures and advances gender equality — in the 2011 consolidated appeals process. Through the process, all clusters of humanitarian response received specific guidance on how to mainstream gender equality within sectors. Preliminary data suggested that compared with the baseline of the 2010 consolidated appeals process, there was a significant increase in gender-responsive projects in the 2011 process. Under the leadership of UNSCO, several meetings were held with members of the donor community to ensure harmonization in development aid effectiveness and meeting commitments on gender equality. In that regard, United Nations entities in partnership with relevant line ministries took initiatives that would allow for tracking of internal and external resource allocations for gender equality priorities and women's needs at the local level.

61. Efforts were also under way to mainstream gender perspectives within the work of United Nations entities. The UNRWA gender action plan mainstreams gender into each of the agency's programme areas. In 2010, UNRWA developed a new approach to the development, design and location of community and public facilities in Gaza, incorporating gender dimensions.

# IV. Conclusions and recommendations

62. During the period under review, the overall humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained challenging. Despite improvements in education for women, there was little positive evidence of their social, economic and legal empowerment. The continued closures, checkpoints and roadblocks limited the access of Palestinian women and girls to health-care services, employment and other opportunities. The recent relaxation of movement restrictions should be continued.

63. Efforts continued at the national, regional and international levels to bring about a just and lasting negotiated agreement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including through direct negotiations. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) highlighted the need for more systematic efforts by all parties to ensure women's full participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives in the region, including in the permanent status negotiations.

64. United Nations entities should continue to provide assistance to women and girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and refugee camps, particularly in areas such as education, health and employment. Special efforts should be made to support the Palestinian Development Plan for 2011-2013, including its cross-sectoral national gender strategy. Enhanced efforts should be made to achieve

women's full participation in decision-making processes at all levels, including in the political and economic spheres.

65. In order to support women's and girls' economic and political empowerment and well-being, increased attention and continued support is needed to improve access to quality education and training that translate into employment opportunities. Strengthened efforts are needed to address stereotypical attitudes that have an impact upon educational and training choices, including through revisions of school curricula and textbooks, and through targeted efforts to combat harmful practices such as early marriage, which may contribute to girls dropping out of school.

66. When supporting employment for women, attention should be paid to ensure that assistance programmes and projects do not reinforce traditional gender divisions of labour, which limit job opportunities for both women and men. Concrete actions are required to increase the participation of Palestinian women, in particular young women, in the labour force. Assistance provided by United Nations entities should not only focus on expanding women's labour force participation into non-traditional sectors but also assist women in better seizing the full benefits and profits from their economic activities. The issue of women's economic empowerment needs to address engagement by women in the full range of activities involved in bringing a good or service to the final consumer, in order to enable them to reach beyond the local market to national and international markets. United Nations partners need to systematically address the bottlenecks preventing women's advancement in those areas, including women's lack of access to productive resources and opportunities; women's limited access to effective transportation of goods; and lack of capacity, resulting from limited education and training opportunities.

67. In order to facilitate the mobility of Palestinian women for personal or employment-related reasons, attention should also be given to increasing their access to safe and affordable means of transport, including public transport to semi-urban and rural areas. The public transportation system could be reviewed and analysed in order to ensure that schedules and connections are supportive of both women's and men's transport needs.

68. Food security continued to be a high priority. Access of women and men to employment often contributes to successful strategies to address food insecurity. Strong, comprehensive measures, including safety nets, employment and/or other income-generating activities are therefore needed to ensure that women have access to safe, adequate, nutritious and affordable food, and to increase the access to technologies, credit and markets by women smallholder farmers.

69. Enhanced efforts are needed to eliminate all forms of violence against Palestinian women and girls. In addition to establishing provisions for penalizing and punishing perpetrators, legal frameworks on violence against women should mandate support for victims and survivors, prevention measures and training for relevant officials. Ending impunity for violence against women requires awareness-raising, training for law enforcement officials and gender-sensitive procedures and processes. The Palestinian authorities and United Nations entities should collaborate to provide support and services for women and girl victims and survivors of violence. The legal framework needs to be harmonized with the provisions of the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and measures for its effective implementation need to be implemented.

70. The Palestinian Authority and some United Nations entities have taken measures to mainstream gender perspectives into their work, including through gender-sensitive strategies and programmes. Further efforts are needed to fully integrate a gender perspective into all international assistance programmes through gender analysis, the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the use of gender-responsive budgeting processes. Additional coordinated efforts are needed to assess the impact of assistance and the extent to which it addresses and matches women's needs. Member States, entities of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should intensify their efforts to provide financial and technical assistance to benefit Palestinian women and girls and should systematically assess and report on the impact of those efforts.

71. Some progress has been made in recent years in addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women in United Nations studies and reports on the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Such publications should systematically focus specific attention on gender equality perspectives and incorporate information on the situation of women and girls, including in reports by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, as well as in other relevant reports of the Secretary-General.

United Nations E/CN.6/2011/7

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 December 2010

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February-4 March 2011
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development, and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters**

# Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report provides information on the activities undertaken by Member States and within the United Nations system to implement Commission on the Status of Women resolution 54/2. The report concludes with recommendations for future action.

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

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# I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 54/2, the Commission on the Status of Women requested the Secretary-General to report to its fifty-fifth session on the implementation of that resolution, using, inter alia, information provided by Member States and United Nations entities. The present report describes the actions taken in the various areas addressed by the resolution, identifies gaps and challenges, and proposes recommendations for consideration by the Commission. It is based on contributions by 26 Member States[1] and 10 United Nations entities.[2]

# II. Background

2. Gender inequality continues to be one of the key drivers of HIV and AIDS (see A/64/735). Gender inequality affects women's experience of living with HIV, their ability to cope once infected and their access to HIV and AIDS services, including treatment.[3] Research by UNAIDS has shown that economic and social inequalities and gender-based power imbalances favour men with regard to sexual decision-making, making women especially vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. In addition, as noted by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, among others, violence against women is a cause of HIV and can also be a consequence of being HIV positive (see, for example, A/HRC/11/6).

3. According to UNAIDS, HIV is the leading cause of death among women of reproductive age, and young women are a particular risk group. Women, especially older women and young girls, are disproportionately affected by the burden of caregiving in the context of HIV and AIDS. The proportion of women living with HIV has remained at 52 per cent of the global total. Worldwide, approximately 20 per cent of maternal mortality is due to HIV-related causes. At the regional level, in sub-Saharan Africa, more women than men are living with HIV and young women aged 15-24 years are as much as eight times more likely than men to be HIV positive. In the Caribbean, in 2009 an estimated 53 per cent of people with HIV were women. In Asia, women account for a growing proportion of HIV infections, from 21 per cent in 1990 to 35 per cent in 2009. In the same year, women comprised approximately 26 per cent of people living with HIV in North America and 29 per cent of those in Western and Central Europe.

4. HIV and AIDS and women and girls continued to be addressed at the global level. In the ministerial declaration adopted on 9 July 2009 by the Economic and

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[1] Algeria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen and Zambia.

[2] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Public Administration and Development Management, United Nations Department of Public Information, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now part of UN Women), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV).

[3] WHO, *Integrating gender into HIV/AIDS programmes in the health sector: Tool to improve responsiveness to women's needs* (Geneva: 2009), p. xii.

Social Council high-level segment on the theme "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health", leaders called for the integration of HIV/AIDS interventions into programmes for primary health care, sexual and reproductive health, and mother and child health, including strengthening efforts to eliminate the mother-to-child transmission of HIV. They also emphasized the urgency of significantly scaling up efforts towards meeting Millennium Development Goal 6 to ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010, and to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015 (see E/64/3/Rev.1).

5. In the outcome document of the United Nations High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals entitled "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals" (resolution 65/1), Member States committed themselves to accelerating progress to achieve Millennium Development Goal 6, including through redoubling efforts to attain universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services; intensifying prevention efforts and increasing access to treatment by scaling up strategically aligned programmes aimed at reducing the vulnerability of persons more likely to be infected with HIV; combining biomedical, behavioural and social and structural interventions, and the empowerment of women and adolescent girls so as to increase the capacity of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection; and strengthening efforts to eliminate the mother-to-child transmission of HIV. In 2011, the General Assembly will undertake a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS of 2001 and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of 2006.

6. The Commission on the Status of Women continued to adopt resolutions on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS, most recently at its fifty-fourth session in March 2010. The Commission also continued to address the issue within the context of priority themes. In its agreed conclusions on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS, the Commission urged Member States to integrate gender perspectives into national HIV/AIDS policies and programmes, as well as into national monitoring and evaluation systems; emphasize the importance of HIV prevention as a long-term strategy to reduce the number of new HIV infections; strengthen the accessibility of quality comprehensive public health care and services, including community-based health services specifically related to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, and increase the number of professional health-care providers to alleviate the current burden on women and girls who provide unpaid care services in the context of HIV/AIDS; and design and implement programmes to promote the active involvement of men and boys in eliminating gender stereotypes and gender-based violence, and educate men to understand their role and responsibility in the spread of HIV/AIDS (see E/2009/27).

7. At its twelfth session, in 2009, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 12/27 on the protection of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS, in which it urged States to eliminate gender inequalities and violence against women and to increase the capacity of women and girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV transmission.

8. Among the human rights treaty bodies, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child have, in their concluding observations on the reports submitted by States parties, expressed concern about the increasing prevalence of HIV among and vulnerability of women and girls; the lack of national strategies and policies to address this issue; and the lack of adequate treatment, care and support for women living with HIV. They have recommended that States should effectively implement programmes and provide adequate medical services and care to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV; disseminate information and materials to the public, particularly to women and girls, on prevention and protection methods; ensure that pregnant women are not forced to undergo HIV and AIDS testing; address the negative stereotypes that increase the vulnerability of women to HIV; enhance women's empowerment; promote the engagement of men in gender-related programmes on HIV and AIDS; ensure that women and girls infected with HIV are not discriminated against; and include a clear and visible gender perspective in policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS.

# III. Measures taken by Member States and United Nations entities

## A. Policies, legislation, resource allocation and coordination

### 1. Policies and strategies

9. Member States increasingly include gender perspectives in their HIV/AIDS response. According to the UNAIDS *Global Report* for 2010, 137 Governments have indicated that they include women as a specific component of a multisectoral HIV strategy. UNAIDS continues to monitor the inclusion of gender equality in national responses to HIV and AIDS through the National Composite Policy Index.[4]

10. Member States have continued to use two approaches to address the gender dimension in HIV policies and action plans. Some Member States have integrated measures to address HIV and AIDS in their gender equality action plans or policies (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paraguay, Peru), or have plans to do so (Trinidad and Tobago). Others have adopted a gender perspective in their national HIV and AIDS policies, strategies, programmes or plans (Algeria, Azerbaijan, Germany, Lebanon, Paraguay, Poland, Yemen), or are planning to do so (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Japan). Gender equality is one of the priorities of Finland's HIV policy. The national AIDS strategies of Peru and Yemen, as well as Yemen's strategy on reproductive health, include specific measures aimed at preventing vertical/mother-to-child transmission. Yemen's national AIDS strategy also promotes the use of male and female condoms. Brazil's "Integrated plan to combat the feminization of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases", launched in 2007, prioritizes the health needs of women. Algeria has adopted a national strategy to prevent mother-to-child transmission. Zambia is in the process of developing a national action plan on women, girls and HIV and AIDS, and consultations with relevant stakeholders have been held. Lebanon is developing programmes to address women and girls and HIV.

11. United Nations entities continued to support Governments in formulating HIV/AIDS responses and addressing its gender dimension. UNIFEM supported the

[4] www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/CountryProgress/2010_NCPI_reports.asp.

inclusion of a gender perspective in the development of national HIV strategies in Liberia and Rwanda. Under its programme "Supporting gender equality in the context of HIV and AIDS" with the European Commission, gender advisers were placed in national AIDS control bodies in a number of countries. UNDP supported the integration of gender perspectives into the AIDS response in Honduras. A joint UNAIDS/Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria mission to China focused on the priority actions to be taken in the area of women and girls in China's national HIV strategy 2011-2015. Jointly with Governments and civil society, as well as United Nations partners, UNDP is conducting gender assessments of the key drivers of HIV, for example in Serbia. The UNDP/World Bank/UNAIDS HIV Mainstreaming Programme supported Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in strengthening their development planning processes to better integrate and implement HIV and gender priorities.

12. In 2009, UNAIDS published *UNAIDS Action Framework: Addressing Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV*. It also published *Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV* (hereafter UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls), an operational plan for the UNAIDS Action Framework, which includes actions to address the key issues faced by women and girls in the context of HIV through partnering with Governments, the United Nations system, civil society and development partners. The Agenda has been launched in 53 countries. *UNESCO's Strategy for Responding to HIV and AIDS*, published in 2007, promotes gender-sensitive measures.

13. Some United Nations entities have developed tools to help integrate a gender perspective in HIV responses. In collaboration with partners, UNFPA continued to produce "report cards" on HIV prevention for young women and girls as advocacy tools aimed at increasing and improving the programmatic, policy and funding actions on HIV prevention for women and girls in 25 countries. Report cards for key populations, including sex workers, have also been developed. UNDP and the Inter-agency Working Group on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV commissioned the development of a road map for assessing national AIDS responses, as well as an online compendium of key resources on gender and HIV.

### 2. Legislation

14. A number of Member States have addressed HIV and AIDS among women and girls in their legislation. Azerbaijan has integrated a gender perspective into its law on HIV and AIDS, and HIV legislation in the Plurinational State of Bolivia addresses issues pertaining to women and girls. Peru has adopted a law on HIV/AIDS which provides all persons living with HIV/AIDS the right to treatment and aims to reduce vertical transmission. UNDP has supported legal reforms in Kyrgyzstan concerning social support and allowances for persons living with HIV.

### 3. Resource allocation

15. According to the UNAIDS *Global Report* for 2010, while women are increasingly included in HIV strategies, budgetary allocations are insufficient. Only 79 countries have indicated that they have a specific budget for HIV activities related to women. Several Member States reported on their budget allocations regarding their HIV/AIDS response, but the amounts allocated to addressing the gender dimensions were not specified. Yemen is planning to allocate a budget for

programmes and projects on prevention and awareness of HIV and AIDS which will take into account the needs of women living with AIDS. The UNIFEM/European Commission programme "Supporting gender equality in the context of HIV and AIDS" focuses on ensuring that priorities for women's empowerment are identified and budgeted in national AIDS responses in Cambodia, Jamaica, Kenya, Papua New Guinea and Rwanda.

### 4. Coordination

16. Coordination among all relevant stakeholders is indispensable in order to achieve effective implementation of gender-sensitive HIV-related strategies. Several Member States (Djibouti, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen) reported on national coordination mechanisms. The national machinery for gender equality is undertaking or participating in initiatives to address the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paraguay and Yemen. In collaboration with other actors, the Ministry of Health in Brazil is in charge of implementing the Integrated plan on HIV and in Belarus, an inter-agency council for the prevention of HIV infection and venereal diseases has been established.

## B. Access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support

17. A number of Member States (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Denmark, Djibouti, Germany, Iceland, Malta, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen, Zambia) reported on measures taken to improve access for women to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support measures. With respect to prevention, Brazil, for example, has taken measures within the framework of its national pact to combat violence against women to expand the supply of contraceptive methods and emergency contraception. In Japan, informational material on HIV prevention is distributed to female sex workers, while in Belarus and Djibouti, prevention measures targeting female sex workers have also been taken. Finland's action plan to promote sexual and reproductive health is focused on increasing the use of condoms among young persons. Jamaica introduced "female condom 2", a programming and promotion pilot initiative targeting women and girls vulnerable to sexual violence due to their socio-economic and financial status. Peru reported on its preventive strategy to promote the use of condoms aimed at women. In Lebanon, antenatal care clinics provide women at high risk of HIV with condoms and offer women infected with HIV support, screening, counselling and treatment at no cost. According to UNAIDS, the availability of condoms, including female condoms, is increasing, but global distribution of female condoms lags behind that of male condoms, according to the UNAIDS *Global Report* for 2010.

18. Some gains have been made towards the goal of eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Surveys have shown that testing for HIV is higher among women than men in some countries, which could be a reflection of the measures taken to prevent mother-to-child transmission. In 2009, an estimated 26 per cent of pregnant women in low- and middle-income countries globally received an HIV test. While this represents an increase compared to 2008, the number remains low. In some regions, a higher number of pregnant women were tested for HIV; in eastern and southern Africa, the proportion increased to 50 per cent in 2009. In other regions, however, such as East, South and South-East Asia, only an estimated 17 per cent of pregnant women received HIV tests. Globally, 53 per cent of pregnant

women in low- to middle-income countries received antiretroviral treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV in 2009; in sub-Saharan Africa, 54 per cent coverage has been attained.[5]

19. A number of Member States (Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Djibouti, Finland, Germany, Lebanon, Malta, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen, Zambia) have taken specific measures to prevent mother-to-child transmission. For example, antiretroviral treatment is provided for pregnant women infected with HIV in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Lebanon, Paraguay, Poland, Trinidad and Tobago and Zambia, while HIV testing for pregnant women is offered in Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Finland, Germany, Malta, Peru, Poland and Trinidad and Tobago. The national coordination mechanism for HIV/AIDS in Paraguay has developed a manual for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission and on HIV counselling. Argentina has developed, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia is developing, guidelines on vertical transmission. Lebanon plans to integrate vertical transmission prevention into reproductive and child health services and to offer HIV testing and counselling to all pregnant women receiving antenatal care.

20. With regard to antiretroviral treatment, globally coverage is higher among women (39 per cent) than men (31 per cent); however, this pattern is not observed in all regions.[6] In addition to antiretroviral treatment, women living with HIV have a range of care and support needs, including psychosocial, physical, socio-economic and legal support, according to the UNAIDS *Global Report* for 2010. Argentina has adopted guidelines on comprehensive care for women living with HIV and recommendations for antiretroviral treatment. Belgium reported on post-infection treatment provided by the centres de reference SIDA, which integrate gender perspectives in their activities. A multilingual DVD on maternity and HIV/AIDS has been produced in Germany and self-help networks for women infected with and affected by HIV exist. An association to support persons living with HIV and AIDS was founded in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Peru is implementing a programme with UNICEF on care for children of mothers with HIV.

21. United Nations entities are supporting States in their efforts aimed at universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support. UNDP leads the inter-agency project "Universal Access for Women and Girls Now!" to accelerate access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. In Tajikistan, UNDP financed a public organization that supports women living with HIV, pregnant women and other at-risk women and their children. UNIFEM supports advocates for migrant women workers in Thailand and Cambodia in providing information on HIV in predeparture training and granting access to antiretroviral treatment upon return. A number of United Nations entities, including UNFPA, UNDP, UNIFEM and UNV, and partners, such as the Coalition of Women Living with HIV/AIDS, aim to improve women's access to quality HIV treatment and care, and reproductive health services. UNAIDS reported on a microbicide, Tenofovir gel, which is a new female-controlled HIV prevention method currently being developed.

[5] See WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, *Towards Universal Access: Scaling up priority HIV/AIDS interventions in the health sector*. Progress Report 2010 (Geneva: WHO, 2010).

[6] Ibid.

22. Some States, such as Jordan, highlighted challenges that certain vulnerable groups, including sex workers, face in accessing treatment. Lebanon is preparing plans to address the difficulties faced by older women, orphans and children in vulnerable situations in accessing HIV prevention, treatment, care and support as well as in caring for persons living with or affected by HIV.

## C. Awareness-raising and capacity-building

### 1. Awareness-raising

23. While steps have been taken to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS among women and men, including at-risk populations, globally only 34 per cent of young men and women possess comprehensive HIV-related knowledge, although this represents a slight increase compared to 2008, according to the UNAIDS *Global Report* for 2010. WHO has found that young women generally have less knowledge than young men.[7] Some countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, reported that awareness among women of HIV prevention methods and transmission was low.

24. A number of Member States (Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Djibouti, Lebanon, Malta, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen) reported on their information and education campaigns and materials on HIV and AIDS designed to increase knowledge, including among women and girls, with a view to preventing new infections. Some campaigns or materials were targeted at risk groups (Poland, Yemen); rural women (Trinidad and Tobago); women living with HIV/AIDS and their families as well as couples and families in which one member was infected (Poland); and women of reproductive age (Peru). Examples include: awareness-raising activities targeted at women working in the public and private sectors, medical personnel, religious scholars and clerics, and the media (Yemen); education programmes for girls and boys about HIV and AIDS (Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Iceland, Peru, Yemen); inclusion of information on HIV and AIDS within the framework of sexual and reproductive health education (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Jamaica, Malta, Peru); distribution of information and education material targeted at young men (Trinidad and Tobago); and initiatives for peer education networks among female sex workers to increase awareness of AIDS (Peru). Germany is carrying out information campaigns that include women-specific material, while young women are reached through campaigns for schools, parents and youth media. Finland reported that obligatory health education had increased awareness of HIV among boys. Lebanon is introducing health education, including information on HIV and AIDS, in school curricula. In Malta, the Internet is used, including Facebook and YouTube, to promote sexual health.

25. United Nations entities have carried out a range of awareness-raising initiatives. The FAO HIV awareness campaigns have targeted rural women in various African countries. In Jordan, UNESCO has produced HIV and AIDS education resource kits, aimed at students, especially girls, as well as teachers, counsellors and health coordinators. In Nepal and Côte d'Ivoire, UNV has helped establish networks of volunteer organizations to reach out to local communities to raise awareness about gender and HIV/AIDS. In the Dominican Republic, Grenada,

[7] WHO, *Integrating gender*.

Nauru and Samoa, the "Youth Visioning for Island Living" projects of UNESCO include HIV and AIDS programmes and specifically address women and girls. UNIFEM supported partners in producing a film and a book featuring the stories of 10 women and a girl who are HIV-positive to raise awareness of the impact of HIV in the Asia-Pacific region.

26. The United Nations Department of Public Information is raising awareness of HIV, women and the girl child through continually disseminating news on this issue. Sixty-two relevant stories were produced in 2009-2010 and an issue of the *UN Chronicle* in 2010 devoted to "achieving global health" included content on women and HIV. The Department facilitated a photo exhibition entitled "Congo Women: portraits of war" at United Nations Headquarters, addressing causes and consequences of violence against women, including HIV infection. Another display featured photographs of HIV-positive mothers and AIDS orphans.

## 2. Capacity-building

27. Building and strengthening the gender-equality expertise of persons responding to HIV. Government bodies responsible for planning and budgeting regarding HIV and other stakeholders is critical for achieving progress in tackling the epidemic. A number of Member States have carried out capacity-building measures for persons responding to HIV. Malta, the Russian Federation and Yemen reported on training provided to health professionals on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment. Algeria is building the knowledge of imams about AIDS, while Bosnia and Herzegovina is providing gender-sensitivity training to public officials. Peru has provided training on the prevention of HIV to women in social and grass-roots organizations as well as to staff of relevant ministries. In Trinidad and Tobago, HIV training was provided to civil society.

28. Many United Nations entities have carried out capacity-building programmes. The UNDP regional programme in Arab States has been working with traditional and religious leaders and women's rights advocates on a strategy to mobilize and train communities on gender- and HIV-related issues. In Tajikistan, UNDP, in collaboration with partners, is developing a training course for imams and the general population on HIV/AIDS issues and is supporting, jointly with the Global Fund, training workshops to address the HIV vulnerability of women and girls. Through the UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds and in collaboration with United Nations partners, UNDP strengthened the capacity of United Nations joint teams on gender and AIDS in 34 countries. UNESCO is providing workshops for school health educators in Lebanon, with an emphasis on the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV. In Asia, UNFPA provided HIV training to 15 national human rights institutions to improve their ability to respond to the vulnerability of women and girls. In Trinidad and Tobago, UNFPA supported training for stakeholders on gender and sexual and reproductive health, with a focus on gender-based violence and its relation with HIV. UNV provided training on awareness-raising activities and practical support for people living with HIV, especially women, to United Nations staff and service providers in Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and Timor-Leste.

## D. Promoting gender equality and elimination of violence against women

### 1. Empowerment of women

59. Discrimination, power imbalances, unequal opportunities and violations of human rights, including violence inside and outside the home, make women and girls more vulnerable to HIV, for example, by creating an environment in which women are unable to negotiate when and how they have sex. These factors can also be a consequence of HIV. Fear of violence, discrimination, abandonment and loss of economic support are commonly cited factors that keep women from learning their HIV status and accessing preventive methods, treatment, care and support. Women are also disproportionately affected by the burden of AIDS-related care, especially in places with weak health and other public sector services. Interventions that address gender inequalities are therefore essential.

60. Many States, including Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovakia, reported on efforts to empower women and promote gender equality, including through action plans and specific strategies. Jamaica has strategies in place to address stereotypical patterns of behaviour of women and men in the context of AIDS. Zambia is testing a pilot project, the "Social cash transfer scheme", to address the role of women and girls in caring for persons infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

61. United Nations entities have carried out various initiatives to promote gender equality in the context of HIV/AIDS. UNDP has provided representatives of 15 national networks or organizations of women living with HIV from all regions with advocacy training, and is supporting social enterprise initiatives for women living with HIV in Cambodia and India. In eight pilot "Delivering as one" countries, UNDP provided financial and technical support for a campaign to address the rights of girls and women in the context of HIV. UNV has supported women volunteers, many living with HIV, in Ethiopia, Haiti, Malawi and Viet Nam, to improve their living conditions and act as peer educators. UNAIDS, UNDP and UNIFEM are proactively supporting leadership skills building of women living with HIV and women's networks and groups. The UNESCO project "Transforming the mainstream: addressing structural gender-related vulnerabilities to HIV and AIDS" aims to strengthen national and international capacities to support gender-transformative strategies aiming at the elimination of structural gender inequalities. FAO and UNDP have developed and implemented programmes with partners and Governments on women's property and inheritance rights and HIV.

### 2. Violence against women

62. Women living with HIV are more likely to have experienced violence, and women who have experienced violence are more likely to have HIV. Violence is a driver of HIV among women, as it increases women's vulnerability to HIV infection and can also be a consequence of being HIV positive. Interventions to address the interface between violence against women and HIV are being increasingly implemented and assessed. Several Member States (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Jamaica, Malta, Peru, Slovakia, Trinidad and Tobago, Zambia) reported on strategies, legislation and/or other initiatives to eliminate violence against women.

83. United Nations entities have carried out or supported initiatives to address the linkages between HIV and AIDS and violence against women. FAO supports the implementation of gender-sensitive livelihood strategies and programmes to counter the compounded impact of HIV and gender-based violence in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Stopping sexual and gender-based violence, along with meeting the HIV-related needs of women and girls, constitute one of 10 key action areas in the UNAIDS Outcome Framework 2009-2011. The UNAIDS secretariat and its co-sponsors have supported various countries in East and Southern Africa to scale up the response to sexual violence and HIV programmes for young women in school. UNESCO is planning a study on school-related gender-based violence, addressing the linkages of gender-based violence and HIV and AIDS. UNIFEM supports partners to develop integrated approaches to addressing violence against women and HIV/AIDS, for example in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo under its project on combating sexual and gender-based violence and decreasing HIV/AIDS. In Tajikistan, UNIFEM supported awareness-raising and training among religious leaders to involve them in local campaigns to prevent violence against HIV-positive women and to encourage voluntary testing in rural areas. UNIFEM reported on the global learning initiative under the United Nations Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence against Women to determine effective practices in programming to address the relationship between HIV and violence against women. A toolkit for men and boys with tips and interventions regarding HIV and gender-based violence has been produced by UNFPA.

## E. Data collection and research

84. Accurate data form the basis for informed strategies and programmes to address the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls, while research, in particular medical research, helps in developing new and effective prevention and treatment methods. Improved capacity to collect, assess and respond to information on HIV and AIDS is needed. Several Member States reported on their collection of information and data on persons living with HIV and AIDS disaggregated by sex and age (Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Germany), or by age, sex, marital status and continuity of care (Lebanon), or by sex, marital status, age and place of residence (Paraguay). In Germany, information on the gender dimension of HIV is collected, while Paraguay is developing an index relating to persons living with HIV to improve programmes and public policies aimed at achieving universal prevention, treatment and support.

85. The UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls contains recommendations on strengthening the capacity of and support to Governments in collecting and analysing sex- and age-disaggregated epidemiological and qualitative data, and calls for a set of indicators on HIV and gender to guide country-level monitoring. FAO is carrying out analytical work to examine the evolving linkages between poverty, food security, gender and AIDS. UNIFEM, jointly with partners, is undertaking research on sexual violence, tourism and HIV to inform the new national HIV strategy in Ghana. In 2010, UNIFEM published a report, *Transforming the National AIDS Response: Advancing Women's Leadership and Participation*, providing an assessment of challenges for women, particularly HIV-positive women, participating

in policy-setting mechanisms and identifying strategies to advance their involvement.

## F. Cooperation

36. Cooperation, focused on integrating gender perspectives into HIV/AIDS responses continued among States and United Nations entities. Bosnia and Herzegovina hosted a regional conference, "HIV and AIDS — HIV and Gender", in March 2008, while Brazil convened the first women and HIV policies ministerial meeting for Portuguese-speaking countries in 2008. Argentina reported on an intergovernmental commission on HIV/AIDS of MERCOSUR, which promotes a regional approach to eliminating sexually transmitted diseases and vertical HIV transmission.

37. Denmark and Finland have mainstreamed gender and HIV and AIDS in their development assistance. Denmark's development assistance is focused on sub-Saharan Africa, which has the highest rates of infection of women. Belgium increased its development assistance directed to combating HIV, parts of which focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Finland prioritizes funding to organizations aiming to reduce HIV infection among women and girls. Germany supports gender-sensitive HIV/AIDS development programmes. Priorities of the Netherlands' development assistance are sexual and reproductive rights and universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care, with a gender perspective. Japan's development assistance in relation to AIDS has contributed to the enhancement of HIV-positive women's networks, reducing the burden of care borne by women and girls in HIV-affected households.

38. The work of global AIDS coordination and funding mechanisms continued. Partnership between UNAIDS and the Global Fund has resulted in synergies between the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls and the Global Fund gender equality strategy. The UNAIDS secretariat has also supported countries to include issues of women and girls into proposals for financing from the Global Fund. The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS aims to create high-level political platforms to promote the needs and rights of women and girls in the context of HIV, and serves as a communication platform. The Global Initiative on Education and HIV and AIDS, led by UNESCO, addresses gender equality and has included technical briefs on gender-responsive approaches and girls' education and HIV prevention as one of its components. The UNAIDS secretariat houses the Global Coalition of Women and AIDS, a partnership between United Nations entities and civil society groups focusing on gender equality.

# IV. Conclusion and recommendations

39. **Member States and the United Nations system continued to address the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS and the impact of the epidemic on women and girls. Many Member States have integrated gender perspectives into their national HIV/AIDS response, or included measures on HIV and AIDS in gender equality strategies and action plans. These efforts should continue. Legislation, strategies, policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS need to address the gender dimension of HIV and AIDS and prioritize women's needs, with**

corresponding budget allocations, in order to achieve the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, and a halt to the spread of the epidemic.

40. Efforts to improve access for women to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support have continued and should be scaled up. This includes strengthening the accessibility of quality public health care, including integrated HIV and sexual and reproductive health services. Investment in female-controlled prevention methods, including female condoms and development of microbicides, should be enhanced. While the availability of female condoms is increasing, further efforts are needed to ensure that they are widely accessible.

41. Many Member States have taken measures to prevent mother-to-child transmission, including offering HIV testing and providing antiretroviral treatment for pregnant women. However, women, including groups of women considered to be at a higher risk of HIV infection, continue to lack access to services to prevent mother-to-child transmission. Efforts should be strengthened to eliminate vertical transmission, including through expanded antiretroviral treatment interventions.

42. Member States and other stakeholders should continue efforts to increase antiretroviral treatment coverage among women and girls, including at-risk populations, and should ensure that treatment is initiated at an early stage of the disease. Women living with HIV should continue to receive treatment after the risk of transmission to their children has ceased. In addition to antiretroviral therapy, women living with HIV require care and support, including psychosocial, physical, socio-economic and legal support. Efforts need to be strengthened to address and eliminate the fear, stigma and discrimination which may lead women and girls not to seek and accept treatment and support where available. Efforts should also be strengthened to empower women living with HIV, including through leadership training.

43. Awareness-raising efforts by Governments and other stakeholders on HIV and AIDS and sexual and reproductive health have included campaigns, educational programmes, peer networks, counselling and other activities. These efforts should continue and be reinforced. They should be directed at the general public, students and health and other relevant professionals, and also be targeted at specific groups such as men and boys and high-risk groups of women, including female sex workers.

44. Governments and other stakeholders should continue to take measures to create enabling environments that empower women and girls and reduce their vulnerability to HIV and the impact of the epidemic on them. Promoting gender equality, the enjoyment by women of their human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against them are essential and should form part of the HIV/AIDS response. Men and boys need to be engaged in changing harmful social norms and practices as part of HIV prevention. Support to women and girls caring for persons living with HIV also needs to be enhanced, including through the establishment of peer support groups.

45. Interventions to address the interface between violence against women and HIV should be enhanced and strategies should aim at preventing both,

More research is necessary to identify the most effective strategies for addressing the intersection between violence against women and HIV. National and global data on violence against women and girls and HIV should be collected and disseminated. Standardized protocols and training should be available to guide health-care personnel on the linkages between violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

46. Women, including those living with HIV, remain underrepresented in HIV/AIDS-related decision-making. HIV-positive women, women caregivers and young women are key stakeholders, and their leadership and participation in the HIV/AIDS response should be strengthened. Supporting women's organizations, especially HIV-positive women's networks, is key for increased attention to the gender dimension of HIV and AIDS.

47. While efforts have been made to better understand the gender dimensions of the epidemic, more information in relation to HIV and AIDS and its impact on women and girls is needed. Such data should be disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors. Efforts should be strengthened to improve capacity to collect and analyse such data. Increased investments in new research, including on female-controlled prevention methods and on maximizing synergies between HIV programmes and other health and development efforts, is also needed.

United Nations A/HRC/16/33/E/CN.6/2011/8

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 November 2010

Original: English

**Human Rights Council**
**Sixteenth session**
28 February-25 March 2011

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February-4 March 2011
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters**

# Joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of UN Women, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report provides a review of the cooperation between the Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of the newly established United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It also indicates a commitment to maintain and strengthen cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN Women.

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

10-65847 (E) 201210

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# I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with resolution 39/5 of 31 March 1995 of the Commission on the Status of Women, resolution 1997/43 of 11 April 1997 of the Commission on Human Rights, and resolution 6/30 of 14 December 2007 of the Human Rights Council. A joint workplan has been prepared annually by the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat, now part of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The workplan for 2010 is contained in document A/HRC/13/70-E/CN.6/2010/7.

2. Cooperation between OHCHR and the Division for the Advancement of Women continued in 2010, with the goal of achieving equality between women and men and the promotion and protection of women's human rights. The major activities that were carried out jointly in 2010 are outlined below (see sect. II), as are plans for the future, taking into account the establishment of UN Women by the General Assembly (see sect. III).

# II. Review of the implementation of the joint workplan for 2010

3. During the implementation of the current joint workplan, the exchange of information continued between OHCHR, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, now part of UN Women, and the Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of UN Women. The Division and OHCHR continued to cooperate within the framework of inter-agency mechanisms, especially the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. The Division and OHCHR participated in the ninth session of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality from 23 to 25 February 2010 in New York. Both entities participated in several of the task forces of the Network, including its Task Force on Violence against Women, co-convened by the Division and the United Nations Population Fund, and the Task Force on Women and Peace and Security, chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. OHCHR also contributed to the inventory of activities of the United Nations system on violence against women, compiled twice yearly by the Division as part of the activities of the Task Force on Violence against Women.

4. Both entities continued to participate in the Inter-Agency Cooperation Group against Trafficking in Persons, chaired by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as in decision-making concerning grants by the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. The Division and OHCHR also continued collaboration within the context of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, specifically in the cluster on the advancement of women, which is co-convened by the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Economic Commission for Africa.

5. An OHCHR staff member participated in an expert group meeting on good practices in national action plans on violence against women in Port of Spain, from 13 to 15 September 2010, co-organized by the Division for the Advancement of

Women and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. The expert group meeting was part of the ongoing work of the Division to develop tools for stakeholders to address violence against women, and based on the outcome of the meeting, the Division will prepare a guide containing a model framework for national action plans on violence against women.

6. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR continued to support the work of human rights treaty bodies and implementation of the major international human rights instruments, including through exchange of information and dissemination of information about the human rights treaty system. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women addressed the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on 29 July 2010 at its forty-sixth session. The Division provided inputs in connection with the preparation by the Committee of a general recommendation on older women, which was finalized and adopted by the Committee on 19 October 2010. In celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, OHCHR organized an event focusing on how the Convention has been a force for change in women's lives globally. The Division for the Advancement of Women participated in this event, during which the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights paid tribute to the Division for its excellent work in promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Convention during the past 30 years.

7. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR continued to update their databases and websites. The Division continued to enhance its website in relation to violence against women, which includes the work of the Human Rights Council, including its resolutions on the elimination of discrimination against women, the elimination of violence against women, and trafficking in persons, especially women and children; work of the special procedures mandate holders; the universal periodic review; and reports of OHCHR to the Council. In its quarterly newsletters on violence against women, the Division included information on resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council, work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and events organized by OHCHR on violence against women, including trafficking in persons.

8. OHCHR and the Division for the Advancement of Women convened a number of meetings, including training seminars and other capacity-building activities, to support implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women and other human rights treaties, including with respect to the preparation of reports and follow-up to concluding observations at the national level. The Division supported the convening of workshops in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and the United Republic of Tanzania. It continued its multiphased support to the Government of Liberia to strengthen capacity for the implementation of the Convention and held a round-table discussion on articles 1 and 2 of the Convention in June 2010. The Division continued to support the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in the preparation of its initial to fourth periodic report to the Committee, and it organized a drafter's workshop in February 2010 and a workshop in May 2010. In October 2010, a workshop was held to support the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania on the implementation of the concluding observations of the Committee. The full involvement and support of OHCHR was sought in connection

with all of the Division workshops on reporting under and implementation of the Convention.

9. The Division for the Advancement of Women continued its interaction with special procedures mandate holders. In particular, the Division maintained contact with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, in the follow-up to the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women (A/61/122 and Add.1 and Corr.1) and General Assembly resolutions 61/143, 62/133, 63/155 and 64/137 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. In addition, OHCHR and the Division continued to exchange information in relation to the work of the Special Rapporteur.

10. Collaboration in support of intergovernmental bodies continued. In March 2010, the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences addressed the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fourth session. In February 2010, OHCHR moderated an online discussion on the theme "Women and human rights" as part of a series of United Nations discussions to contribute to the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.[1] OHCHR staff participated in parallel events to the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, such as an event on discriminatory laws, organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. In October 2010, the new Executive Director of UN Women, the Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences addressed the Third Committee of the General Assembly during the introduction of the agenda item on advancement of women.

11. Coordination of the preparation of reports to be submitted to intergovernmental bodies continued. OHCHR provided inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2010/4), and on ending female genital mutilation (E/CN.6/2010/6), which were submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fourth session. The Division provided inputs to the thematic study of OHCHR on discrimination against women, in law and practice, and how the issue is addressed throughout the United Nations human rights system (see A/HRC/15/40), which was submitted to the Human Rights Council at its fifteenth session, and the report on good practices in efforts aimed at preventing violence against women, which is under preparation by OHCHR pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 14/12.

## III. Future cooperation, in the light of the establishment of UN Women

12. The General Assembly established the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), in resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 on system-wide coherence by consolidating the mandate and functions

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution I, annexes I and II.

of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, with the additional role of leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women is to be operational 1 January 2011.

13. UN Women is in the process of developing its future strategy, including its coordination role within the United Nations system. The strategy will align with the founding resolution. It will focus on expanding support to Member States at the national level, in line with national priorities, strengthening coherence between the normative support provided to global intergovernmental processes and the technical and thematic advice provided to national partners at the country level; and strengthening leadership, coordination and accountability on gender equality and women's empowerment and support to gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system.

14. The realization of women's human rights will be an essential part of the vision and future strategy of UN Women. Cooperation between UN Women and OHCHR will continue and will be strengthened under a mutually agreed broad strategic framework of cooperation, including in connection with intergovernmental and expert bodies and special procedures, capacity-building activities, awareness-raising on women's human rights, gender mainstreaming and inter-agency initiatives, such as the Global Migration Group currently chaired by OHCHR, UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and the Inter-Agency Cooperation Group against Trafficking in Persons. Specific areas of focus will include support for implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations, particularly at the national level; the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council; the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences; and the newly established Working Group of the Human Rights Council on discrimination against women in law and in practice. Common thematic priority areas include human rights of women, violence against women; trafficking in persons; discriminatory laws, including with respect to economic, social and cultural rights; women, peace and security; and global migration.

15. In the upcoming months, UN Women and OHCHR will elaborate further the framework and details in respect of their cooperation. The results will be reported to the Commission at its fifty-sixth session in the joint workplan for the period 2011-2012.

United Nations A/HRC/16/34/Add.3 E/CN.6/2011/9

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 December 2010

Original: English

**Human Rights Council**
**Sixteenth session**
28 February to 25 March 2011
Agenda item 2
**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General**

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February–4 March 2011
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters**

# Report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund to eliminate violence against women

## Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the Fund to eliminate violence against women, which was prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166.

* E/CN.6/2011/1

10-67259 (E) 231210

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A/HRC/16/58
E/CN.6/2011/9

# Report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women

*Summary*

The present report provides a review of the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, an inter-agency grant-making mechanism, as well as a review of programming by the United Nations Development Fund for Women, now part of UN Women, on ending violence against women.

## I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women is a leading multilateral grant-making mechanism devoted exclusively to supporting country- and local-level action to address violence against women and girls in all its forms. Established in 1996 by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/166, the United Nations Trust Fund is governed by an inter-agency Programme Appraisal Committee and administered by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, part of UN Women) on behalf of the United Nations system. To date, the United Nations Trust Fund has supported 317 programmes in 124 countries and territories with more than $60 million.

2. In the present report to the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council, paragraphs 3 through 41 describe the Fund's progress and achievements in 2010, while paragraphs 42 through 67 highlight UNIFEM programming with regard to ending violence against women and girls.

## II. Background and context

3. Over the course of the past decade, the international community has reached consensus that ending violence against women and girls is critical in order to advance international agendas for human rights, peace and security, poverty reduction and development. The intensification of political will to address violence against women and girls is reflected at the national level in the proliferation and strengthening of laws, policies and action plans to eliminate violence against women, and internationally at the highest levels in General Assembly and Security Council resolutions[1] calling for decisive action and increased resources to address this global pandemic.

[1] General Assembly resolutions 61/143, 62/133, 63/155, and 64/137 and A/C.3/65/L.17/Rev.2 on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women; Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) on women, peace and security.

4. The United Nations Trust Fund is well positioned to capitalize on the current global momentum to end violence against women and girls. Recent General Assembly resolutions explicitly refer to the importance of continuing to enhance the effectiveness of the Trust Fund as a systems-wide funding mechanism and reiterate the target set by the Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" to raise $100 million annually in grant-making for the Fund by 2015. In 2010, the General Assembly urged States to significantly increase their contributions to the Fund[2] to help it to bridge the gap between a growing demand for programmes to end violence against women and girls and the resources required to do so effectively.

5. Guided by a new strategic plan for 2010-2015 entitled "Vision 2015", the United Nations Trust Fund is focusing on three priorities: turning policy pledges into reality for women and girls; generating knowledge on "what works" to end the pandemic of violence against women and girls; and building new partnerships, ownership and expanded commitment to the Fund throughout the United Nations system and beyond. Paragraphs 6 to 29 below summarize the Fund's progress in 2010 towards meeting those priorities.

## III. Translating promise into practice

6. The overarching focus of the United Nations Trust Fund is to support the implementation of laws, polices and action plans designed to end violence against women and girls. Initiatives that engage multiple sectors and encourage partnerships among key stakeholders are prioritized. As described below, grantees are promoting primary prevention and expanding services to survivors of violence. They are also strengthening the legal and political framework by improving access to justice and transforming pledges to end violence against women into concrete budgetary and policy commitments. An emphasis is placed on projects that strive to meet the needs of particularly marginalized or neglected groups, including youth, women living in conflict, and indigenous women. The Fund prioritizes interventions that address violence against women and girls holistically, as demonstrated by the special funding window to address the intersections of violence against women and HIV and AIDS.

7. Investments of the United Nations Trust Fund are yielding promising results towards ending violence against women and girls. Recognizing the success of the initiatives of the Fund, Governments and United Nations system agencies are increasingly scaling up grantees' projects to maximize their impact, while civil society organizations across the globe are replicating the practices and strategies of grantees. The scaling up and replication of projects supported by the Fund demonstrates grantees' success in designing effective interventions targeted at social and State institutions, as can be seen in budgetary allocations and other measures to support these interventions. Grantees are also fostering change at the community level as indicated by the decisions of many traditional and religious leaders to ban harmful traditional practices in their communities and advocate against other forms of violence against women. Finally, the number of men and boys publicly denouncing violence against women, as well as the women and girls coming

[2] A/C.3/65/L.17/Rev.2, para. 20.

forward to break their silence, reveal that the initiatives of the Fund are changing the individual attitudes and behaviours that give rise to violence against women.

8. The United Nations Trust Fund has a current portfolio of 83 active grants across 72 countries and territories with a total value of nearly $47 million. Africa has the largest portfolio (29 per cent), followed closely by Asia and the Pacific (26 per cent). Latin America and the Caribbean account for 20 per cent of grants. Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States comprise 14 per cent, followed by Arab States and cross-regional programmes with a grants portfolio of 6 and 5 per cent, respectively.

**Primary prevention**

9. Preventing violence against women and girls requires sustained, long-term initiatives that target the root causes of violence. Approximately one third of the United Nations Trust Fund's active grants are focused on primary prevention and employ multiple interventions designed to change both institutional practices and individual attitudes and behaviour that lead to violence. These interventions include empowering women and girls to identify, articulate and claim their rights; raising awareness about violence against women through public outreach and mass communications; and mobilizing communities to advocate for long-term policy changes or more rigorous implementation of existing laws and policies. In addition, at least 45 per cent of current grantees engage men and boys as partners in ending violence against women, while 25 per cent enlist religious and traditional leaders as allies in changing community views on violence against women.

10. Grantees of the United Nations Trust Fund use strategies to empower women facing multiple forms of discrimination, such as those working with indigenous populations and ethnic minority groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Guatemala, India, Mexico, Nepal and the Philippines. In Jamaica, the Sistren Theatre Collective uses the performing arts to empower women and girls in poor, urban and highly volatile areas of Kingston. Through street theatre productions that have reached over 5,000 people, Sistren opens opportunities for women to share their personal stories in a safe environment and prompts individuals, and even whole communities, to consider non-violent methods for dispute resolution. Now recognized nationally and regionally[3] for its success in using the creative arts to address gender-based violence, Sistren has partnered with several Government ministries and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to share its model in schools and communities nationwide.

11. The United Nations Trust Fund supports programmes in all regions focused on engaging men and boys in efforts to address violence against women, including the first large-scale initiative of this kind in the Middle East. Oxfam Great Britain and Kafa, its partner in Lebanon, have developed a model for women's organizations to engage men by incorporating men's perspectives into campaigns to end violence. Women's organizations have built partnerships with diverse actors, including male university students who help to craft outreach messages for dissemination in the media, universities and other sites of public discourse in Lebanon. A public sensitization campaign about the impact of violence against women on society as a

[3] In 2010, Sistren was granted a puma creative Mobility Award to promote its model throughout the Caribbean. See http://www.creativecaribbeannetwork.com/page/4979?forum_start=n5004#comment-5004.

whole garnered the support of 128 members of Parliament for an intrafamily violence bill prior to national legislative debates. A cross-regional initiative of Instituto Promundo in Brazil, Chile, India and Rwanda has sensitized 7,000 men and boys to the causes and consequences of violence against women, prompting them to change violent behaviour in their daily lives. The results are groundbreaking; participants in Brazil and Rwanda credit the trainings with leading to their personal decisions to stop committing violence against their partners, while trained participants in India meet regularly to hold each other accountable to individual action plans. Promundo's programme in Brazil was honoured as a regional prize winner in the 2010 Nike Changemakers "Changing lives through football" global competition for sponsoring a four-month championship football tournament that engaged men and boys in a campaign to end violence against women and girls (see http://www.changemakers.com/football).

12. Grantees in Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea, Mali and Senegal are achieving impressive results by enlisting community, religious and traditional leaders as agents of change in preventing and condemning violence against women. Action Aid's training programme for traditional and religious leaders across five states in Ethiopia has prompted 16 leaders who previously supported harmful traditional practices such as early and forced marriage or female genital mutilation to ban them in their communities. Grantees in the Middle East also have found that involving religious leaders in violence prevention and response efforts catalyses the shifting of attitudes and behaviours among religious community members. The International Rescue Committee and its local partners in Jordan are successfully leveraging the cooperation of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs to engage local Imams in promoting understanding of violence against women in religious communities and helping survivors to access services.

13. United Nations Trust Fund grantees in South Asia and Central America combine popular education strategies with new media and communication tools to raise awareness of violence against women and engage new partners in prevention efforts. In 2010, Equal Access Nepal won the Special Award at the One World Media Awards for outstanding media coverage from the developing world (see http://oneworldmedia.org.uk/awards/shortlist-winners/special-award). The Equal Access weekly radio show, *Samajhdari* ("Mutual understanding") was honoured for educating 1 million listeners about the interconnection of violence against women and HIV and AIDS. Some 60 groups met weekly to listen to the show and discuss themes raised by the episode's guest, a real person living with HIV. The group's facilitators, all trained in legal issues addressing violence against women and HIV and AIDS, built bridges to service providers and helped to double the number of women seeking assistance and treatment. In Nicaragua, Puntos de Encuentro uses mass communication outlets combined with public outreach and community mobilization strategies to affect social norms and attitudes at the root of violence against women. Capitalizing on the success of its award-winning and internationally recognized television series *Sexto Sentido*, also funded by the United Nations Trust Fund, Puntos de Encuentro is currently producing a new "social soap" series to examine the commercial sexual exploitation of adolescents. The show will be broadcast in Nicaragua, as well as other parts of Central America and the Dominican Republic in July 2011.

**Expanding survivor access to support services**

14. The United Nations Trust Fund supports coordinated, holistic and multisectoral responses that address the interrelated needs of survivors of violence, including safety and protection, access to health, legal, property and inheritance rights, and economic security and rights. One third of the Fund's active grants employ strategies to provide care, treatment and rehabilitation to victims and survivors of violence. A programme of Movimiento Manuela Ramos has contributed to a 14 per cent rise in the reporting rate of domestic violence in an isolated and conflict-prone region of Peru with a majority indigenous population. In that challenging context for reaching and assisting survivors, the initiative has greatly improved cross-sectoral coordination for referrals by convening a task force of government officials, civil society organizations and service providers to develop an inter-agency protocol for responding to survivors' needs. Social Services of Cambodia has developed the first community-based response model in Cambodia for survivors of sexual assault, designed to meet the needs of 80 per cent of women and girls who prefer to receive support services directly from the community as opposed to in a shelter. As the rate of women receiving community-based services has grown by 25 per cent, communities have become more informed about the causes and consequences of sexual assault and local authorities have improved their capacity to support survivors and refer them to legal and medical services, appropriate counselling, and safety assessment and planning.

15. United Nations Trust Fund grantees provide coordinated care to women living with HIV and AIDS who are at risk of violence, or survivors of violence who may require HIV-related services. The grantee Doctors to Children developed a highly successful model of integrated care in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, to reach HIV-positive women who are pregnant or have children. Government and non-governmental institutions joined together to develop an inter-agency protocol for reaching this high-risk yet underserved population. After a successful pilot programme in the Kalininsky district, the city government expanded the scope of the programme to apply to service providers city-wide. To date, nearly 600 women have received assistance in the form of social and psychological support, advice on legal issues, temporary housing and material support.

16. Service delivery to survivors of violence living in conflict, post-conflict and unstable situations poses a complex set of challenges, requiring creative interventions for the 17 per cent of grantees working in those settings. International Medical Corps United Kingdom has developed a mobile care model to provide comprehensive treatment to survivors of sexual violence from the Central African Republic now living in northern Cameroon. In only one year of implementation, the rate of sexual violence survivors receiving medical care and counselling has increased fourfold. Previously unavailable testing for HIV, as well as access to antiretroviral treatment for the 50 per cent of survivors who test positive, are now standard practice. The national reparations programme of Sierra Leone has received the first grant of its kind from the United Nations Trust Fund to ensure that reparations programmes are tailored to the needs of women survivors of sexual violence. Through a strong collaboration with local women's organizations, the programme registered 3,600 victims of sexual violence and prioritized 600 of the most vulnerable victims to receive reparations. After only one year of implementation, 300 women are participating in skills-training programmes across

14 districts of the country, moving towards sustainable livelihoods and a life free from violence.

**Securing budgetary and policy commitments for implementation**

17. The United Nations Trust Fund supports projects that fill critical gaps in implementation of laws and policies addressing violence against women, ranging from standardized data collection to political advocacy to developing capacities of government officials and other stakeholders charged with implementation or enforcement of laws.

18. Nearly 60 per cent of grantees collect and analyse data that can be used to build the evidence base necessary for formulating policy and monitoring progress towards the implementation of national commitments to end violence against women. A cross-regional initiative of Women in Cities International collects data to support policies aimed at eliminating daily harassment and sexual violence in urban spaces. In four cities on four continents (Delhi; Dar es Salaam; Petrozavodsk, Russian Federation; and Rosario, Argentina) the initiative engages women in participatory research activities such as street surveys, neighbourhood safety audits, and group discussions to gather their knowledge on key safety concerns in their communities. In all cities, the data has convinced policymakers and other stakeholders to improve the safety of public spaces. The local partner in Delhi was invited by the city's Municipal Corporation to provide inputs into a road redesign project, marking the first time that women's safety concerns have been included in an urban design project in India. In Petrozavodsk, data from the surveys on women's safety convinced local police chiefs to produce the nation's first set of gender-disaggregated municipal crime statistics.

19. Grantees of the United Nations Trust Fund are almost universally working to strengthen institutional and professional capacities of those tasked with the implementation of laws, policies and action plans to end violence against women. The non-governmental organization Refleksione successfully piloted a cross-sectoral referral system to implement Albania's newly adopted Law on Domestic Violence at the local level. In each of the five targeted municipalities, the programme trained over 300 public sector professionals and established two institutions at the local level: a decision-making council comprised of government agencies working on domestic violence and a technical working group of service providers to implement the council's decisions. Now with budgetary commitments from four cities and with renewed support from the United Nations Trust Fund, Refleksione is doubling the scope of the programme to serve 10 municipalities. Another grantee develops the capacity of local women's organizations in six Pacific Island countries (Samoa, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Tonga, the Cook Islands and Solomon Islands) to advocate for fixing gaps in national legislative frameworks addressing violence against women. In Nauru, after women's organizations urged members of Parliament to incorporate model legislation on violence against women into revisions of the penal code, the draft legislation was amended to include an expanded definition of rape and the criminalization of domestic violence.

20. Other grantees of the United Nations Trust Fund focus on enforcement of laws that address violence against women through strengthening judicial systems and improving access to justice for survivors of violence. Solidarite féminine pour la paix et le développement intégral (SOFEPADI), a women's rights organization

based in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, receives support from the Fund to address impunity for sexual violence emerging from the country's decades-long conflict. Through a mobile courts system that holds trials for sexual violence cases in rural communities, SOFEPADI has successfully reduced the backlog of cases and encouraged more victims to file complaints. Over 150 cases have been filed to date, of which 70 resulted in convictions. In recognition of the achievements of SOFEPADI in bringing justice to victims and restoring public confidence in the rule of law in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Government of France is sustaining the project with funding for three mobile courts.

## IV. Building new partnerships, ownership and expanded commitment

21. Violence against women cuts across all sectors, population groups and public and private spaces, requiring the engagement of multiple stakeholders. Securing the involvement of traditional and new actors is thus a hallmark of the United Nations Trust Fund's strategy, centred on mobilizing broad-based partnerships and garnering support from an ever-growing range of actors including Member States, private and individual donors, non-governmental organizations and United Nations sister agencies.

22. The United Nations Trust Fund is founded on United Nations partnerships and working to increase ownership of the Fund across the United Nations system. A key platform to enhance these synergies is the Inter-Agency Programme Appraisal Committee comprised of United Nations system agencies at the global and subregional levels. This entity advises the Fund on strategic decisions and grant-making issues. The Inter-Agency Programme Appraisal Committees at the subregional level in particular enables links to existing United Nations efforts and national priorities. This decentralized and broadly participatory structure ensures that funding allocations conform closely to the capacities and needs of diverse countries and regions, thereby promoting the overall relevance of the Fund to national priorities and context.

23. In 2010, the 13 Inter-Agency Programme Appraisal Committee members at the global and subregional levels included United Nations system agencies, representatives of other inter-agency mechanisms, and a leading civil society organization. Participating United Nations system agencies at the global and subregional levels in 2010 were: Division for the Advancement of Women; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; International Labour Organization (ILO); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Regional Commissions New York Office; UNIFEM; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); UNDP; the World Health Organization (WHO); and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The Programme Appraisal Committee met a total of four times at the global and subregional levels to provide critical expertise and guidance in shaping the United Nations Trust Fund's Strategic Plan for 2010-2015.

24. As part of "delivering as one", grants to United Nations country teams since 2008 have established direct synergies with United Nations programmes at the country and subregional levels. To date, the United Nations Trust Fund has disbursed $10.6 million to country teams in 11 countries. The Fund also collaborates with other

United Nations initiatives to address violence against women. The "Say NO — UNiTE to End Violence against Women" online advocacy platform of UNIFEM (http://www.saynotoviolence.org) encourages donations for the Fund and showcases the achievements and impact of its grantees. In 2011, the Fund will join with the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the Fund and the fifth anniversary of the Secretary-General's ground-breaking in-depth study on all forms of violence against women (A/61/122/Add.1 and Corr.1).

25. The United Nations Trust Fund has built partnerships with leading research and expert institutions, including the International Center for Research on Women, PATH, and the USAID MEASURE project. The Fund is brokering new partnerships with philanthropists, high-profile spokespersons, and other individuals capable of raising the Fund's visibility while expanding engagement with the private sector.

## V. Generating knowledge and developing capacities

26. Although the number and breadth of interventions addressing violence against women and girls has increased in the last decade, there is a dearth of rigorous evaluation assessing their impact on women's lives. Consequently, it remains difficult to identify "what works" in preventing and redressing such violence. In 2010, the United Nations Trust Fund implemented the recommendations made by the 2009 external evaluation, which urged the Fund to develop the capacities of grantees to conduct effective monitoring and evaluation and to improve the Fund's processes for capturing and disseminating knowledge.

27. The United Nations Trust Fund strengthened its processes for monitoring and evaluation by providing technical feedback to grantees starting in the proposal development phase and continuing with assistance in developing and implementing grantees' monitoring and evaluation plans. As in previous years, the 2010 Call for Proposals for the fifteenth grant-making cycle recommended that applicants dedicate 10 per cent of grants requested to evaluation, and an additional 2 to 5 per cent to monitoring. The United Nations Trust Fund secretariat grew its own capacity to monitor grantee programmes by visiting twice as many grantees in 2010 as the previous year, totalling 7 monitoring visits to 18 grantees in 14 countries, in addition to the regular monitoring by focal points for the Fund at UNIFEM subregional offices.

28. Closing the gaps in grantees' capacity to design and implement programmes and knowledge about "what works" in ending violence against women is central to the mandate of the United Nations Trust Fund as described in the Monitoring, Evaluation and Knowledge Management Framework 2008-2011. In 2010, the Fund institutionalized capacity-development training for all new and recently funded grantees on evidence-based programme design, monitoring and evaluation. The Fund held four regional skills-building workshops in three languages, reaching a total of 43 organizations.[4] The workshops were modelled after two successful pilot workshops convened in 2009 in partnership with the International Center for Research on Women. Grantees responded enthusiastically to the Fund's capacity-

[4] Two regional workshops were held in June 2010, one in Dakar for French-speaking grantees and one in Managua for Spanish-speaking grantees. Workshops conducted in English took place in Nairobi and Bratislava in October and November 2010, respectively.

development training and have begun to integrate evidence-based research, monitoring and evaluation tools into their existing programmes. At least three grantees have initiated cross-learning activities to consider the possibilities for adapting strategies and practices to other contexts.

29. In 2010, the United Nations Trust Fund made significant investments in a system for global monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management. As the Fund invests in a sophisticated database to capture results, the secretariat has begun to map the outcomes of initiatives, focusing on certain indicators of success such as measures taken to sustain and replicate projects. Beginning with its fifteenth call for proposals issued on 23 November 2010, the Fund launched an online application process that will allow the secretariat to better assist applicants and improve efficiencies with respect to management and collection of applicant data. The appraisal process will also be conducted online, contributing to the accuracy and transparency of the assessment and selection process. These tools are essential to the development of an integrated system that will facilitate results-based reporting and help the Fund track and analyse trends across the entire grant-making portfolio. In collaboration with UNIFEM subregional offices, the United Nations Trust Fund completed several case studies of lessons learned and good practices generated by grantees. Finally, grantees' evaluation reports, training manuals, and outreach and communications tools were gathered to feed the UNIFEM global virtual knowledge centre (http://www.endvawnow.org/).

## VI. Grant-making cycle 2010

30. United Nations Trust Fund grants are awarded annually through an open, competitive, and transparent process that ensures quality programming and rigour in the selection of grantees. The call for proposals invites holistic initiatives that focus on reaching particularly excluded or disadvantaged groups through approaches tailored to diverse needs. Priority is placed on applications that highlight multisectoral approaches and collaboration between various stakeholders; evidence of what works to optimize the use of resources; and investment in systematic and comprehensive documentation and evaluation aiming at generating and sharing knowledge. Through its grant-making process, the Fund channels global expertise and resources to the local level, where they are needed most. It also underscores the potential for scaling up successful initiatives, while emphasizing development of national capacities to foster sustainability.

31. In 2010, despite a severe global economic crisis, the United Nations Trust Fund supported the implementation of national laws, policies and programmes to end violence against women at the same funding level as 2009. Over $10 million was awarded to 13 initiatives in 18 countries and territories for programmes expected to reach 280,000 beneficiaries. The grants awarded in 2010 complete the Fund's fourteenth grant-making cycle, delivering a total of $20.5 million for 26 initiatives in 33 countries and territories.[5]

[5] The United Nations Trust Fund's fourteenth grant-making cycle was awarded in two batches. The first round of grants administered in 2009 was based on contributions received by the end of the third quarter of that year, which totalled $10.5 million. Additional contributions of $10 million received in the fourth quarter of 2009 allowed the Fund to award a second group of grants in the first quarter of 2010 as part of the fourteenth cycle.

32. Since 2008, as the resource base of the United Nations Trust Fund has increased, a shift to larger and longer-term grants has allowed for larger-scale interventions that can achieve higher-level results and better sustainability efforts. In 2010, the Fund has again offered grants of up to $1 million, and the majority received three-year grants. In 2010, Asia and the Pacific received the largest amount of funds (35 per cent), followed by Africa (28 per cent), Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (13 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (10 per cent) and Arab States (10 per cent), and cross-regional grants (4 per cent). Belarus, the Marshall Islands and Sri Lanka are first-time grant recipients. The majority of new grantees include women's organizations (31 per cent), followed by United Nations country teams (23 per cent), development organizations and youth organizations (15 per cent each), and governmental organizations and human rights organizations (8 per cent each).

33. Grants awarded in 2010 focus on initiatives working with youth, including two that will address the needs of rural girls. In China, the Beijing Cultural Development Centre for Rural Women will develop protection mechanisms for rural girls left behind by parents working in cities, while in Peru the Asociacion de Comunicadores Sociales Calandria will empower rural adolescent youth to become leaders in the movement to end violence against women and girls. The Trust Fund's emphasis on engaging men and boys continues with a grant to the Mother Child Education Foundation in Turkey, which will model a highly innovative programme engaging fathers in the prevention of gender-based violence within the family, and with support for the Zambia Young Women's Christian Association to establish 200 men's networks to advocate against violence.

34. Other grantees will work with particularly marginalized populations. The Jordanian Women's Union will establish the first regional network in Egypt, Jordan and Morocco to address trafficking and protect women migrant workers' rights, and the Acid Survivors Trust International will pilot groundbreaking strategies for ending acid burning against women in Cambodia, Nepal and Uganda. Pathfinder Mozambique will leverage sexual and reproductive health services as a means of reaching violence survivors such as adolescents and women living with HIV. In India, Nepal and the Philippines, the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation will support local indigenous leaders to engage in advocacy and community mobilization towards the reform of customary laws that tolerate violence against women.

35. Other grantees will focus on closing gaps in legislation and strengthening national capacities to implement policies and enforce laws addressing violence against women and girls. Women United Together Marshall Islands, in partnership with government agencies, will increase public awareness and strengthen national legislation and protocols around domestic violence. In Burundi, the ministry of Human Rights and Gender will undertake a comprehensive multisectoral initiative to implement the National Strategy against Gender-based Violence. United Nations country teams in Belarus, Indonesia and Sri Lanka and will support multisectoral interventions to enforce national laws addressing violence against women and girls. A summary of all new grantees can be found on the United Nations Trust Fund website (http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/trust_fund_grantees.php).

## VII. Mobilizing resources

36. The United Nations Trust Fund's ability to pursue a strategic vision in support of country-level implementation of commitments to end violence against women and girls depends on its ability to mobilize adequate resources. Appeals made by the General Assembly for increased resources to the Fund in resolutions 61/143, 62/133, 63/155 and 64/137 have enhanced the Fund's capacity in that regard. The Fund's new Strategic Plan emphasizes outreach across public and private sectors in order to leverage resources and partnerships for the long-term sustainability of the Fund.

37. For grants awarded in 2010 to complete the fourteenth grant-making cycle, the United Nations Trust Fund benefited from the support of the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, and Antigua and Barbuda. For pledges received in 2010 for the fifteenth grant-making cycle, the Government of Spain continues as the leading supporter of the Fund,[6] followed by the Netherlands, the United States of America, Australia, Finland, Germany, Austria, Iceland and Liechtenstein. The Governments of Finland and the Republic of Korea also supported two Junior Professional Officer positions for the United Nations Trust Fund secretariat.

38. The private sector has an important role to play in ending violence against women and girls. In 2010, Avon Products Inc. and Johnson & Johnson were lead private sector partners of the United Nations Trust Fund. The latter has supported the Fund's special window on links between violence against women and HIV and AIDS since 2005. The non-profit organization Zonta International generously contributed to the Fund for the fifth consecutive year. The Fund was also supported by UNIFEM National Committees in Canada, Japan, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.[7]

39. In 2010, the United Nations Trust Fund developed and began to implement a fund-raising strategy to meet the Secretary-General's challenge as part of the UNiTE campaign to raise $100 million to distribute in grant-making in 2015. To execute this strategy, the Fund focused on integrating its communications and outreach activities. In collaboration with the UNiTE campaign, the Fund hosted a high-level event to encourage private sector involvement in efforts to end violence against women and girls. At a public event on the International Day to Eliminate Violence against Women, the Secretary-General announced the fifteenth call for proposals and launched a mobile giving promotion to heighten the Fund's visibility and encourage individual donations.

## VIII. The way forward

40. Moving into its fifteenth year, the United Nations Trust Fund will continue to support high-quality, evidence-based programmes that achieve targeted results with maximum impact. In accordance with the strategic direction set forth in Vision 2015, and building on the recommendations of the external evaluation in 2009, the Fund will grow its processes for collecting and disseminating knowledge about what works in ending violence against women. In 2010, the Fund built a strong

[6] The Government of Spain was also the highest contributor for the fourteenth grant-making cycle, but these funds were dispersed in 2009 in the first batch of grantees.
[7] Contributions were made towards the fifteenth grant-making cycle.

foundation to develop a knowledge management system, as described in section V above. Next steps include the completion of a sophisticated global monitoring system in order to capture and track grantees' results more efficiently and make them more accessible to a global audience. In 2011, with a view towards facilitating cross-learning, the Fund will create multiple global platforms for connecting grantees using similar strategies or interventions.

41. The establishment of UN Women by the General Assembly in 2010 provides a welcome institutional framework to strengthen collaboration and capture global expertise on approaches to end violence against women. Although the United Nations Trust Fund faces the continuous challenge of meeting extraordinary global demand for programmes to end violence against women, it will seek opportunities for leveraging existing resources as it intensifies its resource mobilization to engage new and diverse strategic partners.

## IX. UNIFEM (part of UN Women) programming on ending violence against women

42. UNIFEM (part of UN Women) currently supports programmes to address gender-based violence in some 90 countries of the world. Guided by its strategy, "A life free of violence: unleashing the power of women's empowerment and gender equality", in the course of 2010, UNIFEM advocacy, programming, partnerships, outreach and inter-agency collaboration continued to expand at global, regional and national levels, highlights of which are provided below.

### Furthering policies, laws and their implementation

43. The ongoing policy of UNIFEM and its technical advisory services to national Governments, advocates and other stakeholders included support to women's machineries in eight Caribbean countries for evidence-based development of national action plans to end violence against women; as well as in the Seychelles, with the Ministry of Health and Social Development, and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with the Ministry of Women's Affairs on the development of the national strategy — a first of its kind in the Arab region.

44. Through its ongoing work with parliamentarians, women's machineries and the women's movement, UNIFEM continues to support efforts for legislative reforms to end impunity and improve women's access to justice. At the global level, this included expanded collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union at the regional level, to strengthen legislators' learning and exchange opportunities on good practice for strengthened enforcement and monitoring, and gender-responsive budgeting, as well as completion of an inter-institutional memorandum of understanding. At the country level, UNIFEM provided support for legal reforms, with the passage of the law on domestic violence in Timor Leste, and amendments to Albanian laws related to family violence in order to improve confidentiality measures, sustainable shelters, and coordinated community response systems by local government.

**Improving access for survivors, developing the capacities of key policy and service delivery institutions**

45. A major focus of UNIFEM work has centred on access to justice for survivors. Highlights include the continued support of UNIFEM in Argentina, along with UNDP and UNICEF, to the newly created Office of Domestic Violence of the Supreme Court — the first of its kind at the national level. The Office assists women survivors of violence with services, including referrals to civil or penal courts and health and social services. The court is responsible for tracking and assessing the cases, to provide data in order to analyse patterns of impunity and the judiciary's response to gender-based violence cases. In Thailand, training of judicial staff is aiming to strengthen enforcement of the Domestic Violence Act; the rearrangement of courtrooms using partitions and cameras now also protects survivors from directly encountering their perpetrators. Support to the legal system of Nigeria has resulted in a handbook entitled "Access to justice for trafficked persons", which serves as a guide for taking cases through the legal system, from the identification of a potentially trafficked person until the case is closed.

46. UNIFEM also contributed to improved policies and service delivery for women survivors of violence in various countries, such as through its work with national women's machineries in Ghana, Liberia and Peru; to increased access to legal assistance in Ethiopia, Fiji and the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and to a strengthened police response in Nigeria. UNIFEM also partnered with excluded groups of women to hold policymakers accountable to eliminate violence, including indigenous women, HIV-positive women's networks; young women and migrant women workers from Africa, Asia, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Stop Violence against Women in the Economic Community of West African States Subregion initiative engages women's national machineries, religious leaders, the Association of Women Lawyers and rural women's platforms, thus contributing to the implementation of the Africa component of the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign.

47. Also in line with the UNiTE campaign, UNIFEM provided technical and financial assistance to the high-level International Conference on the Role of Security Organs in Ending Violence against Women and Girls, held in Kigali in October 2010 and hosted by the Rwanda National Police and Rwanda Defence Forces Gender Desk in partnership with "One United Nations". The Conference was attended by police chiefs, senior police and military officers responsible for gender and community policing affairs, as well as members of civil society organizations, the United Nations system, and academia involved from different countries both within and outside Africa. The Kigali Declaration on Ending Violence against Women and Girls, adopted at the event, reaffirmed the commitments for action and the efforts to continue building on best practice to expand justice and services for survivors in the continent.

48. In terms of support for capacity development at the global level, during the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2010, UNIFEM launched a unique online resource for service providers, programmers, policymakers and advocates that provides ready access to the state-of-the-art on "what works best" to address gender-based violence: the Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls (see http://www.endvawnow.org). Developed with leading experts and organizations from around the world, the site offers high-quality guidance in

multiple languages on "how to" design, implement, monitor and evaluate programmes, as well as over 700 recommended tools in more than 50 languages, with a fully searchable database. It draws on good practices, lessons learned and evaluations generated by Governments, civil society organizations, researchers and United Nations system agencies. To date, comprehensive programming modules have been made available (each on average 200-300 pages), covering programming basics, monitoring and evaluation, safe cities, working with men and boys, and formulating legislation — with more advanced for launch in 2011, including on prevention, the health sector, the education sector and campaigns.

**Expanding data collection, analysis and tracking systems**

49. Data collection and analysis is another area of UNIFEM-supported efforts, including to inform the development of effective public policies (e.g., in Guinea-Bissau and the Republic of Moldova) and to support the efforts of women's networks in tracking progress (e.g., in Ecuador). Related to the launch of the Global Safe Cities Free of Violence against Women Programme (see para. 56 below), a joint research initiative in India was undertaken by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Delhi, Jagori, the UNIFEM South Asia Office and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), to bring policy and public attention to the levels of sexual harassment and violence faced by women in public spaces in the city of New Delhi. Another study was commissioned on data- collection practices among selected agencies in South-East Europe, with a focus on domestic violence, with a view to developing a set of indicators to track the prevalence of violence against women and to monitor the institutional responses to violent crimes against women.

**Addressing sexual violence as a tactic of warfare**

50. In 2010, UNIFEM began the second phase of a multi-country programme on community-based peacebuilding and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, consisting of activities at the global level as well as in Haiti, Liberia, Timor-Leste, and Uganda. These included, for example, technical capacity-building of the police in those four countries — for example, trainings, the revision of curricula, the provision of material inputs such as vehicles and communication equipment so as to respond more effectively to violence against women, and brokering regular interaction and trust-building activities with women's organizations, continued support for local community safety committees in Haiti, the development of a monitoring and tracking system for gender-based violence cases in Timor-Leste, and trainings of the judiciary on national jurisprudence on gender-based violence in Liberia, as well as projected expansion of the "peace hut model" as a good example of a women-led local protection strategy.

51. Under the umbrella of United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, now chaired by the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, UNIFEM has taken the lead on several activities, mainly (a) advocacy, via the 200,000 "Get crossed" campaign, a petition to "Say no to sexual violence in conflict", and 26 Open Days on Women and Peace and Security, co-organized with UNDP, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which culminated in a Global Open Day in which women activists had a chance to present their demands, priorities and recommendations to the United Nations leadership in their countries; (b) the launch

of the publication "Addressing conflict-related sexual violence: an analytical inventory of peacekeeping practice", which compiles examples of prevention and protection strategies, and their translation into scenario-based training materials for predeployment and in-mission training of military peacekeepers, and (c) the continued collaboration of UNIFEM with the Department of Political Affairs on mediation, and the launch of a three-year joint strategy that includes, inter alia, the development and use of practical guidance for mediators on how to deal with conflict-related sexual violence in peace processes.

52. Two main reports on women, peace and security were submitted to the Security Council on the tenth anniversary of its resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2010/173 and S/2010/498), with implications for violence against women in general. UNIFEM supported the technical development of a comprehensive list of indicators to track the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Some of the indicators will be used to strengthen information on prevalence and patterns of sexual violence in conflict, police and judicial follow-up of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers or humanitarians, as well as cases of violence against women in general, and an index on women's and girls' physical security that would take into account perception and other proxy variables. A separate report on women's participation in peacebuilding contains an action plan identifying concrete initiatives in seven key peacebuilding areas that, at least indirectly, have a bearing on the prevention of and protection from violence against women in conflict and post-conflict settings, including mediation, post-conflict planning and financing, the deployment of international civilian capacity, governance, economic recovery and rule of law, for example, recommendations on immediate legal assistance for women and minimum standards of gender-responsiveness for transitional justice institutions.

### Forging partnerships and expanding outreach, communications and partnering with the media

53. The outreach of UNIFEM with the mass media, public awareness-raising and social mobilization efforts continue to expand and intensify at all levels, as a key to sustaining and mobilizing commitments and "zero tolerance", including in the framework of the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign.

54. A major UNIFEM contribution in that regard was as coordinator, in close collaboration with various other United Nations sister agencies, of the regional components of the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign. In 2010, the campaigns were launched in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Caribbean; while the Latin America campaign continued to progress since its launch in November 2009. The UNIFEM Say NO — UNiTE initiative, which has emerged as a valuable tool for engagement and awareness-raising globally, has documented over 1 million actions over the course of the past year. Among the many innovative and original initiatives at the national and regional levels, was a photo exhibition presented by the African Union, in partnership with UNIFEM, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange, during the African Union Summit held in Uganda in July 2010, under the theme "Make peace happen: prevent violence against women and girls".

55. Another example of public and media outreach, seizing the opportunity of the 2010 World Cup Soccer in South Africa, UNIFEM joined the Red Light 2010 campaign, a regional civil society effort to counteract the trafficking of women and girls ahead of and during the games; and also organized a soccer tournament in Johannesburg in April, with the message, "Say no to trafficking in women, say yes to women's rights". This formed part of UNIFEM collaboration as a member of the United Nations Task Force that works in support of the Government of South Africa to prevent human trafficking.

56. Also in line with the focus on raising awareness and advancing prevention strategies, the launch, in November 2010, of the UNIFEM innovative Global Programme on Safe Cities Free of Violence against Women and Girls provided additional opportunities for media coverage and dialogue on the neglected but universal phenomenon of sexual harassment and violence in public spaces. With a focus on the poorest areas and slums in five cities from different regions of the world — Quito, Cairo, New Delhi, Port Moresby and Kigali — the Programme is being developed in collaboration with UN-Habitat, other United Nations system agencies (including UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF) and leading women's networks, among other partners. This is the first cross-regional initiative dedicated to developing a proven model for making cities safer for women and girls, by reducing sexual harassment and violence in public spaces, while improving the quality of life for all city dwellers. The model will be offered for adaptation by local authorities and stakeholders in cities around the world.

57. Engaging non-traditional and influential partners, including the private sector, in the struggle to end gender-based violence and advance women's empowerment is key. In that regard, and in order to offer practical guidance to businesses on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community, UNIFEM developed the Women's Empowerment Principles through a partnership with the United Nations Global Compact. The Principles are designed to support companies in reviewing existing policies and practices — or establishing new ones — to realize women's empowerment. With the subtitle "Equality means business", the Principles emphasize the business case for corporate action to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and are informed by real-life business practices, the interests of Governments and civil society. The Principles acknowledge the importance of addressing violence in women's lives through, inter alia, workplace protection from sexual harassment and exploitation and access to services related to domestic violence.

58. Working with religious leaders is also strategic if social norms that accept gender-based violence and discrimination are to be transformed. In the Sudan, UNIFEM is partnering with a local non-governmental organization to mentor Islamic and traditional leaders to become advocates and champions of women's human rights protections within the legal framework in Darfur, and to facilitate radio discussions on women's rights under Islam. Similarly, collaboration with faith-based organizations, from global to local levels, permeates various UNIFEM-supported efforts.

59. UNIFEM membership since 2009 in the Clinton Global Initiative network continued, including as a partner announced at two related launches during the annual event in September 2010 (Together for Girls (see para. 62 below); and the "going global" of the cutting-edge Ring the Bell Campaign led by the

non-governmental organization Breakthrough); and as a member of the Affinity Groups organized on violence and gender issues in the lead-up to the event, with a range of private and public sector counterparts to foster new partnerships.

**Engaging groups of strategic importance: adolescents and youth, men and boys**

60. The evidence is building that the prevention of violence against women and girls must start at younger ages, and that engaging adolescents and youth, and men of all ages, is a critical component to future success.

61. UNIFEM places strategic emphasis on advancing the rights and needs of adolescent girls, and on the role that young people of both sexes can play in prevention. It is one among more than 20 partners of the Man Up Campaign — the first global initiative focused exclusively on youth leadership and mobilization to address ending violence against women and girls. UNIFEM is also a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Adolescent Girls, a global initiative focused on the needs and rights of marginalized adolescent girls in the context of the Millennium Development Goals and efforts aimed at poverty reduction and development. UNIFEM plays a key advisory and technical role on engendering the programme frameworks overall and more specifically on the pillar on gender-based violence, in collaboration with UNFPA and UNICEF (as co-chairs), and ILO, UNESCO and WHO. The Task Force will provide technical support and guidance to United Nations country teams in developing holistic programmes, with initiatives starting up in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Liberia and Malawi, with support from the United Nations Foundation.

62. UNIFEM also continued to support the Together for Girls initiative, a partnership spearheaded by a private sector individual, co-led with UNICEF and the United States-based Centers for Disease Control, involving other United Nations system agencies (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNFPA, WHO). It is focused on expanding the country data collection (via surveys) on sexual abuse against girls, in order to spur action and policy and service delivery responses.

63. UNIFEM also contributed to include a gender perspective in the agenda of the World Youth Conference held in Mexico in 2010 and in the joint statement signed by 27 heads of United Nations system agencies in New York at the global launch of the International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding. It also organized the Young Women's Forum during the Confere e, an open space of discussion about innovative solutions to empower young women as agents of peace, development and justice.

64. Collaboration with pro-equality men's groups and the MenEngage Alliance, on which UNIFEM serves along other United Nations sister agencies on the International Advisory Committee, is ongoing at the advocacy and technical levels. This included UNIFEM collaboration with the partner organization's expert on masculinities issues to develop the programming module on engaging men and boys in violence prevention; convening a Commission on the Status of Women panel for the release of the findings of a new international survey reflecting male attitudes about gender and violence; and continued collaboration with men's networks at the country level (e.g., Colombia and Nepal, among others).

**Inter-agency collaboration**

65. Most of the efforts and programmes highlighted above are rooted in partnerships with a range of stakeholders from government, civil society, the women's movement, experts and researchers, and include United Nations inter-agency collaboration.

66. UNIFEM continues to play a key role in United Nations country team joint efforts and programmes to address violence against women in many countries, including in its role as chair and co-chair of gender theme groups, and as partner or lead agency of United Nations country team programmes (including those dedicated to addressing violence against women under the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund in Bangladesh, Colombia and Morocco).

67. At the Headquarters level, UNIFEM continues to serve as founding and active member of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict; the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Response; the Task Force on Violence against Women, established within the Inter-Agency Network on Gender Equality (including as an implementing partner of the United Nations country team pilot programmes at the country level); and as a member of the Working Group of the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign and the High-Level Steering Committee, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General. At the regional level, for example, in addition to its key role in the roll-out of the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign, it also collaborates with UNDP, UNFPA and United Nations Volunteers in the Asia-Pacific Regional Joint Programme entitled "Partners for prevention: working with boys and men to prevent gender-based violence".

United Nations E/CN.6/2011/10

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 November 2010

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-fifth session**
22 February-4 March 2011
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions**

## Letter dated 8 November 2010 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

This year's substantive session of the Economic and Social Council was marked by a high level of participation and engagement from Member States, civil society and the United Nations system. The interest by various stakeholders reflects renewed confidence in the Council as a forum for meaningful debate and discussion on broader development challenges and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Council made a strong contribution to make 2010 a watershed year for women through its Annual Ministerial Review. The Review, with its focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women, served as a bridge between the 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in September. Several elements from the discussions and ministerial declaration adopted at the end of the high-level segment fed into the Summit's outcome document.

With regard to the other outcomes of the substantive session of the Council last July, I would like to highlight some of the important proposals made by the Council, which are of relevance to its subsidiary bodies. A list of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council specifically calling for action by the subsidiary bodies is annexed for your reference. The full texts can be found in document E/2010/INF/2/Add.1.

I would greatly appreciate it if the above could be brought to the attention of the Commission on the Status of Women for consideration and action, and wish to thank you for your continued assistance and collaboration in that regard.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

*(Signed)* Hamidon **Ali**

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

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# Annex

## Document calling for action by all relevant United Nations bodies/entities of the United Nations system

**Ministerial declaration of the 2010 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council submitted by the President of the Council (Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women)**[a]

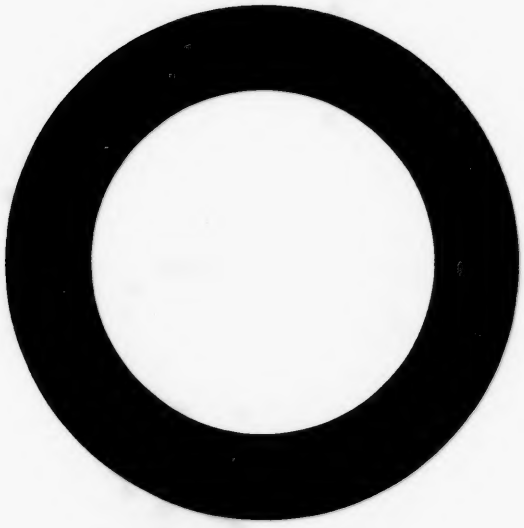
## Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2010 requesting follow-up by the Commission on the Status of Women

| *Resolution number* | *Title* |
|---|---|
| 2010/6 | Situation of and assistance to Palestinian Women |

## Resolutions calling for action by all relevant United Nations bodies/entities of the United Nations system

| *Resolution number* | *Title* |
|---|---|
| 2010/1 | Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations |
| 2010/8 | Tobacco use and maternal and child health |
| 2010/11 | Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development |
| 2010/12 | Promoting social integration |
| 2010/13 | Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda |
| 2010/22 | Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system |
| 2010/24 | The role of the United Nations system in implementing the ministerial declaration on the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health adopted at the high-level segment of the 2009 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council |
| 2010/25 | Recovering from the world financial and economic crisis: a Global Jobs Pact |
| 2010/27 | Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010 |
| 2010/28 | Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti |
| 2010/29 | Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system |
| 2010/30 | Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations |

[a] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/65/3/Rev.1), chap. III, sect. E.



United Nations E/CN.6/2011/11

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22 November 2010

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
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## Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education

### Note by the Secretariat

1. Since 2002, the Economic and Social Council, pursuant to paragraph 13 of its agreed conclusions 2002/1 of 26 July 2002,[1] has invited its functional commissions to provide inputs to the overall theme of the Council's coordination and high-level segments as they relate to their area of work. In its resolution 61/16 of 20 November 2006, the General Assembly adopted new working methods for the Council to strengthen its role as the central mechanism for system-wide coordination in the implementation of, and follow-up to, the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related fields. Within the framework of these new working methods, the Assembly decided that the Council should hold annual ministerial-level substantive reviews as part of its high-level segment and requested the Council to urge its functional commissions to contribute to the review. At its substantive session of 2008, the Economic and Social Council requested its functional commissions to contribute to the annual ministerial review, in accordance with their mandates (see Council resolution 2008/29, para. 8).

2. Also at its substantive session of 2008, the Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2008/258 of 25 July 2008, decided that the theme for the annual ministerial review in 2011 would be "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education".

3. The present note has been prepared by the Secretariat to highlight recent and ongoing work of the Commission on the Status of Women in the area of education

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/57/3/Rev.1), chap. V, sect. A, para. 9.

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that could serve as the Commission's input into the high-level segment of the Council's substantive session of 2011.

4. The priority theme of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fifth session is "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work."

5. In accordance with the Commission's methods of work, the Commission's high-level round table for heads of delegation should focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme. The outcome of the high-level round table is a chairperson's summary.

6. As part of its discussion on ways and means to accelerate implementation of previous commitments in the priority theme, the Commission will hold two interactive expert panel discussions, one with a focus on identifying key policy initiatives to accelerate implementation and one on capacity-building on gender mainstreaming in relation to the priority theme, based on an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, with the participation of technical experts and statisticians. The outcome of the discussion will be in the form of agreed conclusions negotiated by all States. In addition, the moderator's summaries of the interactive expert panels will be prepared.

7. The Commission will have before it two reports of the Secretary-General on the priority theme (E/CN.6/2011/3 and E/CN.6/2011/5). As part of the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, an analysis of national trends in implementation, gaps and challenges, and future strategies and actions to accelerate implementation, based on the responses of some 140 Member States, was prepared (E/2010/4-E/CN.6/2010/2). This report contains a section on progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action's critical area of concern B, education and training.

8. The outcomes of the Commission's session, and in particular its agreed conclusions, as well as the moderator's summaries of the high-level round table and the interactive expert panels on the priority theme should serve as the Commission's input to the 2011 annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council.